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# FINANCIAL TIMES

Europe's Business Newspaper

WEDNESDAY APRIL 14 1993

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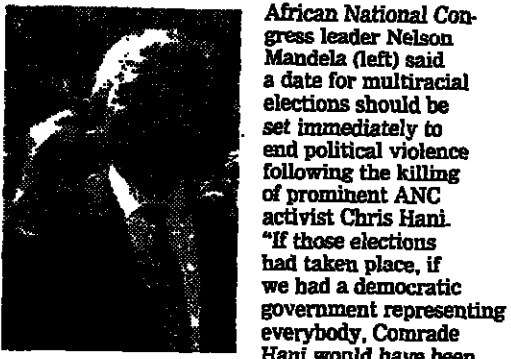
## Retail sales fall casts doubt on US recovery hope

US retail sales dropped by 1 per cent last month renewing pessimism about the strength of the nation's economic recovery and sharpening President Bill Clinton's arguments in favour of the \$16bn spending stimulus he wants to push through Congress. Page 18; Currencies, Page 36; World stocks, Page 35

**Bosnia food appeal:** European Community countries faced an urgent appeal for food aid for Bosnia, as officials warned that the UN had practically run out of supplies for the country's stricken population. Page 18; Morillon recall sparks row; UN asks EC for food aid, Page 2; Foes with shared values, Page 16

**IG Metall:** Germany's powerful engineering union, may be about to abandon its opposition to separate wage deals between east German companies and their employees. Page 2

**Mandela calls for multiracial elections**



African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela (left) said a date for multiracial elections should be set immediately to end political violence following the killing of prominent ANC activist Chris Hani. "If those elections had taken place, if we had a democratic government representing everybody, Comrade Hani would have been alive," Mandela told a rally near Hani's home in Boksburg, east of Johannesburg. Meanwhile the country braced for political violence during today's planned mass strike called by the ANC to mourn the killing. Page 5

**EBRD 'unrepentant':** The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development said it was unrepentant about spending \$200m on itself over the past two years and was proud of its record on loans to former east bloc countries. Page 9

**Merrill Lynch:** largest securities house in the US, saw its shares rise sharply after it reported record first-quarter profits of \$42m, up 57 per cent from a year earlier. Page 17

**CGIP:** French holding company which recently raised its stake in the Carmaudon/Box packaging group, announced a fall in net profits to FF642m (\$100.3m) last year from FF767m in 1991. Page 17

**UK companies optimistic:** Hopes of a UK economic recovery were raised by a survey showing companies predicting flourishing sales and new orders. Page 18 and Lex

**Romanian MIGs crash:** Two Romanian air force pilots were killed when their MIG-21 fighters collided during a training flight near Caracal, 150 km west of Bucharest.

**Westinghouse Electric:** US conglomerate hit by severe difficulties in its financial services division and recent management changes, recorded a \$64m after-tax profit in the first quarter compared with a net loss of \$46m in last year's first quarter. Page 17

**Coca-Cola:** Atlanta-based soft drinks group, reported a 21 per cent improvement in earnings per share during the first quarter and an 18 per cent advance in profits, before accounting-related charges, to \$45m after tax. Page 20

**Mass pile-ups:** More than 70 cars and trucks and one bus crashed in fog which cut visibility to 45 metres on the Munich-Stuttgart autobahn. Police said 36 people were injured, nine seriously, in the accident near Garmisch.

**Nigeria subsidy move postponed:** Nigeria's ruling military council has deferred removal of the fuel price subsidy, due on June 1, to avoid unrest in the run-up to presidential elections on June 12. Page 5

**Suez:** one of France's most prominent industrial and financial holding companies, recorded its first loss in its history last year. Page 20

**New threats to Maastricht treaty:** British efforts to ratify the Maastricht treaty on European union face fresh threats of delay from opposition politicians. Page 9

**Crude price rises:** Crude oil rose in value by around 20 cents a barrel after Opec ministers pledged to try to adhere more strictly to previously agreed production quotas. Commodities, Page 28

STOCK MARKET INDICES			
FT-SE 100	2848.8	(+25.0)	New York Composite
Value	4.01		\$ 1,556
FT-SE Europe 100	1157.54	(+6.14)	London
FT-A All-Share	1385.73	(+0.26)	\$ 1,559 (1,525)
Nikkei	20,740.29	(+558.15)	DM 2,462.50 (2,435)
Hang Seng	10,145.00	(+257.75)	FF 8,325 (8,292)
Dow Jones Ind Ave	3447.54	(+18.45)	SFR 2,255.00 (2,257.5)
S&P Composite	445.57	(+1.28)	Y 175.75 (173.25)
			Z Index 88.7 (88.1)
US LUNCHTIME RATES			
Federal Funds	3%		
3-mo Treas Bill	2.5%		
Long Bond	104 1/2		
Yield	6.771%		
LONDON MONEY			
3-mo Interbank	5 1/8%	(Same)	
Life long bill future	Jun 107 1/4 (Jun 105 1/2)		
NORTH SEA OIL (Aargau)			
Brent 15-day (May)	\$18.59	(+1.71)	
Oil Gold			
New York Comex June	\$338.55	(338.2)	
London	\$336.55	(336.55)	
STERLING			
New York Composite			
\$ 1,556			
London			
\$ 1,559 (1,525)			
DM 2,462.50 (2,435)			
FF 8,325 (8,292)			
SFR 2,255.00 (2,257.5)			
Y 175.75 (173.25)			
Z Index 88.7 (88.1)			
DOLLAR			
New York Composite			
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London			
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DM 2,462.50 (2,435)			
FF 8,325 (8,292)			
SFR 2,255.00 (2,257.5)			
Y 175.75 (173.25)			
Z Index 88.7 (88.1)			

Austria	S&P50	Greece	D400	Lat	LB400	Qatar	QF1200
Bahrain	D1125	Hungary	F1172	Malta	LB400	S.Africa	SP11
Belgium	BF100	India	R4100	Macao	MD113	Singapore	SP410
Bulgaria	LC400	Indonesia	R4100	Norway	NO1600	Spain	SP200
Cyprus	CF100	Israel	IS400	Philippines	PH400	Sweden	SP15
Czech Rep	K405	Italy	IT400	Poland	PL400	Switzerland	SP120
Denmark	DK15	Japan	JP400	Portugal	PT400	Taiwan	SP100
Egypt	EG400	Korea	K400	Romania	RO400	Turkey	TR400
Finland	FI400	Malaysia	MY400	Slovakia	SK400	USA	SP100
France	FR400	Netherlands	NL400	Slovenia	SL400		
Germany	DM300	Peru	PE400	Slovenia	SL400		
		Poland	PL400	Slovenia	SL400		
		Portugal	PT400	Slovenia	SL400		

## Public spending plan lifts market and wins qualified US approval Japan announces \$117bn economic recovery package

By Robert Thomson in Tokyo

JAPAN yesterday unveiled a ¥13,200bn (\$117bn) economic package aimed at reviving its troubled economy and combating protectionist pressures over the growing Japanese trade surplus with the US and Europe.

The package of public investment and tax concessions - the government's second major boost to the Japanese economy in nine months - was greeted by a 4.3 per cent surge in stock prices and a cautious welcome from US officials in Tokyo for a meeting of the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations.

The Nikkei average closed above 20,000 for the first time in more than a year. It ended 858.15 higher at 20,740.29, or 44 per cent above its August low at the time of the previous package.

Mr Lloyd Bentsen, the visiting US Treasury Secretary, said Japan is in the "very fortunate position" of having the financial resources to contribute to international growth.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party said the stimulus would ensure that the country was set "on the path to recovery".

Japanese economic growth slumped to post-war lows over

the past two years, following the collapse in the Tokyo stock market in early 1990. Demand for imports from the rest of the world fell while troubled Japanese banks dogged by bad debts have cut international lending.

Japanese business organisations generally welcomed the spending proposals, which, in raw terms, exceeded the ¥10,700bn emergency package announced last August. But retailers, looking for a rekindling of consumer demand, were disappointed that an income tax cut was not included.

Mr Kiichi Miyazawa, prime minister, said the package should enable the country to meet its official forecast of 3.3 per cent growth for the current fiscal year, ending next March.

But the package is heavily weighted towards public works investment, prompting concern among private economists that it could create a spending bottle-

neck that will work against a balanced economic recovery.

Apart from ¥4,170bn in fresh public works spending and ¥1,600bn in early purchases of land for public projects, the package includes a commitment to contract at least 75 per cent of public works funds already budgeted for this fiscal year by the end of the first half.

Other measures include:  
• ¥1,500bn to be invested in "social infrastructure". The amount includes funds for the purchase of technology by universities and medical institutes.  
• ¥3,500bn in new investment by local governments.  
• ¥1,800bn in new funds for government housing loan companies, and lower interest rates for borrowers from those companies.  
• ¥1,510bn for government-affiliated financial institutions which provide funds to small and medium-sized companies.

Mr Miyazawa plans to explain the details of the package to US President Bill Clinton in Washington during a meeting scheduled for Friday. The Japanese leader had insisted that the amount be decided before his departure for the US, where Japan has been criticised for not encouraging economic growth.



US Treasury secretary Lloyd Bentsen welcomes the Japanese package

But the US may raise questions about how much of the package is fresh money and how much is merely a front-loading of existing plans and a recycling of government-controlled savings that would eventually be pumped back into the economy.

Mr Bentsen yesterday expressed "hope" that the package, likely to be approved by the Japanese parliament next month, will reduce the country's overall

trade surplus, and "create a better balance in trade between Japan and the US".

His comments came after the announcement of a record \$111.34bn trade surplus for Japan in the fiscal year ending last month, a rise of 26.2 per cent. The surplus for the month of March was also 26 per cent higher than in the same month last year, suggesting that the gap has not yet begun to shrink.

## UK and China set date for talks on HK

By Robert Mather in London and Simon Davies in Hong Kong

BRITAIN and China are to hold talks in Beijing on April 22. The decision, announced yesterday, breaks a five-month procedural deadlock over democratic reforms for Hong Kong proposed by Mr Chris Patten, the colony's governor.

The dispute over Mr Patten's reform programme, which has seen China heap increasingly vicious personal abuse on the governor, threatened to embitter the remaining years of British sovereignty over Hong Kong.

which is to be handed over to China in 1997.

China had also threatened to restrict trade between the two countries and to veto big projects in Hong Kong, which Beijing says required its approval under the 1984 Joint Declaration between the two countries.

Mr Patten refused to say whether China had changed its position on the talks, merely describing the decision as "a victory for common sense". He was speaking in London, where he had talks over lunch with Mr John Major, the prime minister. He said: "I very much hope

that we can come off at the end of the day with an agreement on proposals which are fair and acceptable to the people of Hong Kong."

The announcement was anticipated by aggressive buying on the Hong Kong stock and futures markets. Ahead of the news, the Hang Seng index closed 132.54 up at 6,418.21. The April Hang Seng Index futures contract, a significant barometer of short-term confidence, closed at an 82-point premium to the Hang Seng, and Hong Kong shares were in heavy demand later in London, suggesting that investors were expecting

another strong performance today.

Although the agreement settles none of the fundamental issues raised by Mr Patten's reforms, it appears to be a genuine compromise. China has accepted the presence of three Hong Kong delegates in the British negotiating team, whereas it had previously rejected any Hong Kong participation.

Britain, for its part, appears to have agreed that the three Hong Kong representatives should not play a direct part in the negotiations. They will be there "to support" the British representative,

Sir Robin McLaren, the ambassador to China, the British embassy in Beijing said.

Significantly, the colony's three representatives - Mr Michael Sze, Hong Kong's secretary for constitutional affairs; Mr Peter Lai, his deputy; and Mr William Ehrman, Mr Patten's political adviser - were not mentioned in the joint statement announcing the talks in Beijing, although Mr Patten said they were full members of the British team.

Down a familiar path, Page 5  
Editorial Comment, Page 21

## French repo rate cut boosts equities

By Alice Rawsthorn in Paris

THE BANK of France closed a chapter in the saga of its battle to defend the franc yesterday by replacing its main short-term lending facility - the 12 per cent five-day repurchase rate - with a cheaper and more flexible 10-day facility at 10 per cent.

The cut followed last week's fall in French money market rates. It was greeted with sharp gains on the Paris stock market, with the CAC 40 index breaching the 2,000 barrier to close 1.57 per cent higher at 2,018.08.

Mr Edmond Alphandery, finance minister, said he was confident that interest rates would "fall further in the days to come". He called on the banks to cut loan charges.

The franc firmed slightly, closing at 3.38 against the D-Mark. Market rates were relatively stable, with overnight money at 9.75 per cent and one-month money at 9 per cent.

Economists cautioned that the reduction was really a corrective measure to bring official interest rates down from their "crisis" level, to follow market rates. They were sceptical about the prospect of immediate cuts in bank base rates, which have been held since January at 10 per cent, the same level as the new 10-day rate.

Mr Jean-François Mercier, chief French economist at Salomon Brothers, said: "Technically, this cut is not very meaningful. But it is an important symbolic gesture."

Although the new conservative government emphasises a long-term policy of lower interest rates, most economists suspect that the French authorities will wait for the Bundesbank to signal cuts in German rates - particularly as the provisional inflation figures for March showed a 0.5 per cent increase, slightly higher than expected, bringing France's annual inflation rate to 2.3 per cent.

Ms Juliette Brisac, economist at Paribas, said: "We certainly expect French rates to be far lower by the end of this year and there could be another small cut in the short term. But the next

Continued on Page 18  
Currencies, Page 34  
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## Fininvest poised to raise cash by activities merger

By Haig Simonian in Milan

FININVEST, the privately-owned media and financial services group of Italy's Mr Silvio Berlusconi, is poised to raise cash by merging and floating its main publishing activities.

The scheme, which has yet to be given a formal go-ahead by Mr Berlusconi, involves merging Silvio Berlusconi Editore, Fininvest's magazine publishing and industrial printing business, with Mondadori, Italy's biggest publisher, which Fininvest controls.

Shares in the amalgamated unit, which would have annual sales of about L2,000bn (\$10m), would be offered to domestic and international investors, with Fininvest retaining 51 per cent. The proceeds would be used to bring down the group's debts, officially about L3,000bn, although some bankers put the total higher.

"We are looking seriously at these hypotheses, but no final decision has been made," said Fininvest.

The group has steered clear of some of the over-ambitious takeovers which have driven other international media concerns into difficulties, and has not visibly suffered from the recession. However, Mr Adriano Galliani, head of its television interests, and one of Mr Berlusconi's main lieutenants, said it was "in a consolidation phase".

Indirect confirmation that preparations for the deal are well under way came with news last weekend that SBE had bought 20 per cent of Mondadori's ordinary shares from the Fininvest parent company.

No price for the intra-group transaction was disclosed. However, the transfer has been seen as a first step to the merger between the two publishing operations later this year.

Goldman Sachs and Banca Commerciale Italiana have been appointed to advise on the deal. However, bankers note that Mr Berlusconi, on whom the ultimate decision rests, has not yet fully committed himself.

Two years ago, the widely-expected flotation of Fininvest's Silvio Berlusconi Communications film subsidiary was shelved because of opposition from Mr Berlusconi, who remains hostile in principle to the participation of outside shareholders in his activities. However, bankers believe a cash-raising exercise is much more likely now in view of the greater financial pressures on his group.

The merger of SBE with Mondadori is likely to come through a reverse takeover, which would precede placing a large proportion of the shares in the combined unit.

SBE is best known for publish-

ing Italy's biggest-selling magazine, TV Sorrisi e Canzoni and a new magazine, Noli. The company made net profits of L89.7bn on sales of L330bn in 1992.

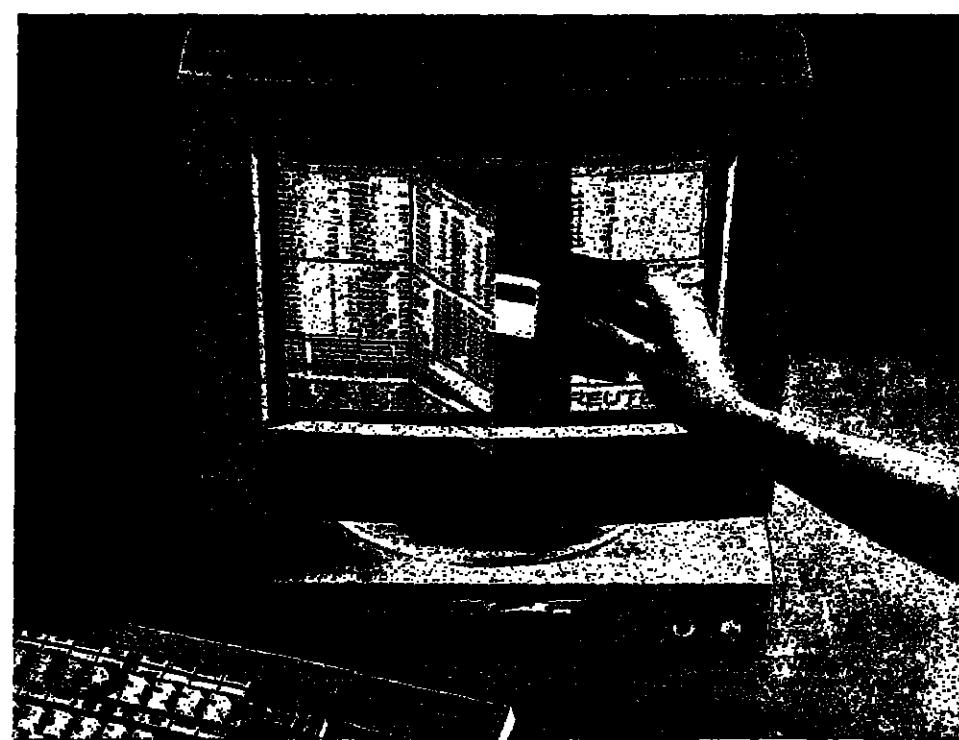
Mondadori is Italy's biggest book publisher, and also has sizeable magazine interests, including Panorama, the country's biggest-selling news magazine. Sales amounted to L1,800bn last year.

Fininvest gained control of Mondadori's book and magazine interests after a long-running battle for control between Mr Berlusconi and Mr Carlo De Benedetti at the end of which Mondadori was split, with Mr Berlusconi retaining its publishing and magazines.

Although still listed, Fininvest controls almost 90 per cent of its ordinary shares and 80 per cent of its savings stock. Mondadori's share price has risen sharply this year on rumours of a deal.

Bankers believe up to 40 per cent of the shares being sold could be placed with foreign investors, explaining the role of Goldman Sachs in the transaction. However, in contrast to the planned flotation of Fininvest's film interests, which had been slated for the New York Stock Exchange, the SBE listing would only involve Milan.

VNU to sell printing division, Page 20



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## NEWS: EUROPE

IG Metall weighs approach on wage deals

## German union may shift on bargaining

By Judy Dempsey in Berlin

SIGNS have emerged that IG Metall, Germany's powerful engineering union, may be about to abandon its opposition to separate wage deals between individual east German companies and their employees. Any such move away from centralised wage bargaining would have important implications for industrial relations throughout Germany, according to economists.

"Essentially, this dispute [between union and employers in eastern Germany] is about deciding where power lies," one economist said. "Will wage negotiations still be centralised among the employers' associations and IG Metall's federal organisation, or will it be decentralised in eastern Germany, which, eventually, will have an impact on western Germany?"

IG Metall was yesterday adamant that it will go ahead and ballot its members in eastern Germany in preparation for an all-out strike among the region's steel and engineering sectors.

The strikes are aimed at putting pressure on Gesamtmetall, the metal and electrical employers' association, and Arbeitgeberverband, its steel counterpart, to rescind their decision to end a contract for eastern wages to be brought into line with those in the west by April 1994.

But the union yesterday admitted it had not yet decided precisely "where or when" the ballots would take place. "The joint working parties on pay will have to decide to ask for a ballot [in the companies]," said Mr Jörg Barczynski, IG Metall's federal spokesman.

The union's hesitation in organising an all-out strike, even though it still believes one is inevitable, stems from conflicting pressures in the five eastern states. Several companies in eastern Germany, most notably in the car, shipbuilding and privatised steel industry, have offered 25 per cent pay increases.

"These concur with the original March 1991 contract between the employers, IG Metall and eastern German enterprise managers."

"It will be difficult to bring these workers out," an IG Metall official said. But the union is reluctant to call off the strike because other enterprises are offering 9 per cent, as recommended by the employers, or a bit more. "That would mean admitting the end of the contract which Gesamtmetall broke," said Mr Barczynski. However, he added that IG Metall could envisage a situation where collective wage bargaining in eastern Germany would be superseded by separate contracts.

It appears IG Metall would be prepared to accept, in eastern Germany at least, an end to the traditional system of collective wage bargaining between employers and unions, even though it has accused the employers of wanting to use the wage conflict in eastern Germany to end that system.

Gesamtmetall was yesterday adamant that it did not want to break collective bargaining. "Individual contracts may well happen in eastern Germany, but it is a special case. It would not happen in the west," an official said.

## Aznar seeks to calm peseta fears

Tom Burns and Peter Bruce on Spain's centre-right leader who is well-placed in polls

THE centre-right Spanish opposition leader Mr Jose Maria Aznar tried yesterday to calm investors' worries about conservative political and economic priorities by promising to maintain a strong peseta within the European monetary system.

With some opinion polls putting his Partido Popular (PP) slightly ahead of the governing Socialists, following the calling of a snap general election for June 6, he has come under strong pressure from advisers to tone down attacks on the many orthodox elements of current economic policy.

Mr Aznar has previously threatened the peseta's permanence in the EMS, largely in an attempt to capitalise on the problems which Mr Felipe Gonzalez, the prime minister, has been having in controlling Spain's slide into recession.

With both parties now fighting for the vital middle ground in Spanish politics, the polls indicate, however, that neither Mr Aznar nor Mr Gonzalez should be revitalised by his badly divided party - will score an outright win in the election.

Mr Aznar, 39, said he was confident of obtaining a "sufficient majority", indicating his readiness to govern in coalition with the middle-of-the-road Catalan

SPAIN: WHERE THE PARTIES STAND				
	March 69 <sup>a</sup> poll	Projected Seats	Election 1989	Seats Held
PSOE (Socialists)	33.8	151	38.6	175
PP (Conservative)	33.3	150	25.8	107
UI (Communist)	11.5	29	8.1	17
CDS (Centrist/Liberal)	2.0	1	7.9	14
PNU (Basque Nats)	1.2	6	1.2	5
CIU (Catalan Nats)	5.0	20	5.0	18

Source: \* Demoscopia, for El Pais

nationalist party. The Socialists make much the same kind of claims for themselves.

Mr Aznar told a news conference that he ruled out a devaluation of the peseta and intended to keep the currency within the exchange rate mechanism of the EMS.

Acknowledging that it was markets and not governments that devalued currencies, Mr Aznar said that, if elected, he would boost confidence in the currency by implementing strict spending controls to reduce the budget deficit.

The Partido Popular leader added that he would pursue an extensive privatisation policy and that he would amend Socialist legislation currently before parliament that has been sidelined by Mr Gonzalez's gamble on Monday to call a snap general election.

A PP-led government, he said, would introduce changes

to a controversial draft strike law which employers contend is weighted heavily towards the unions.

Mr Aznar said he would maintain a blueprint Socialist law that establishes the autonomy of the Bank of Spain but that he reserved the right to name a new governor of the bank when the law appeared on the statute book.

Mr Aznar's promises to "make Spain fit again" and to "turn a new page" recalled those of Mr Gonzalez, 51, more than a decade ago when the now embattled prime minister campaigned on the theme of "change" and promised to "make the country function".

Spain is now in recession, as it was in 1982, and figures released yesterday showed that last month a further 56,000 Spaniards registered at unemployment offices.

This brought the official

number of job-seekers to 2.5m, or 16.6 per cent of the working population. In March last year the number registered at unemployment offices dropped by nearly 11,000.

Mr Gonzalez, aware that the PP could already be the front-runner in the polls, is preparing to stage a constant whistle-stop tour around the country when the campaign opens officially in six weeks' time.

In the previous election in 1989 he held meetings only at weekends.

The prime minister is also understood to be manoeuvring to maintain key ministers on the Socialists' electoral lists. At the heart of the party's division is a bitter confrontation between Mr Gonzalez's moderate cabinet and the left-leaning party machinery - led by Mr Alfonso Guerra, the deputy party leader - which blames government economic policy for declining public support.

The divide between the government and the party came to a head last week when Mr Gonzalez, backed by several members of his cabinet, attempted to force the resignation of leading party executives allegedly connected with illicit campaign funding. The party machinery refused to allow the dismissals but under

an apparent compromise agreement handed the reins of the electoral campaign over to the prime minister.

Many Socialists, however, already regard the period just after the elections as almost as important to the party's future as the poll itself.

If Mr Gonzalez, who remains the country's most formidable campaigner, is able to secure enough votes to enable the party to lead a coalition, it seems likely that an emergency party congress would then be used to clear it of many of Mr Guerra's supporters.

In the event that the Socialists lose, and the PP forms a government, it seems unlikely that Mr Gonzalez would want to stay in politics and might leave the party in the hands of its current left-wing managers.

Either way, analysts worry that whichever party forms a coalition with the Catalan or Basque nationalists, these junior partners would demand high prices - in terms of greater autonomy and more spending on their regions.

That the markets fear, could make it very difficult for any new government to control the country's growing budget deficits.

## Bank of France faces battle to keep its powers

By David Buchanan in Paris

THE Bank of France plays a bigger role in its national economy than any other European central bank. Its 17,000 employees implement monetary policy, regulate commercial banks, compile corporate data, run the payments clearing system, even provide "management advice" to industry and conduct some private banking.

But French politicians will soon decide whether some of the bank's roles should be hived off to a separate authority. Mr Edmond Alphandery, finance minister, has said he will produce a draft statute on the bank's future by the end of this week, which he expects parliament to pass before the summer break.

The Maastricht treaty dictates that national central banks must be made independent in the transition to economic and monetary union (EMU), with their board members having "irrevocable" tenure for at least five years and being forbidden to "solicit or accept" instructions from outside bodies. The treaty is, however, silent on what other roles independent central banks should have, beyond conducting monetary policy.

It is in this grey area that bureaucratic battle has begun between the Bank of France, which naturally wants to move into its new era of independence or autonomy with all its powers intact, and other institutions, notably the influential Trésor department of the finance ministry, which sees merit, not to say self-interest, in slimming down the "Old Lady" on the Rue de la Vrillière.

The odds are the central bank will keep its present powers. This was indeed the provision in the draft statute produced earlier this year by the UDF party in the ruling conservative coalition, from which Mr Alphandery hails.

However, the finance minister has chosen, as the director of his private office, a Trésor official, Mr Christian Noyer, who has openly suggested that the central bank suffers from a

potential conflict of interest between its job of controlling liquidity and its role of lender-of-last-resort.

Mr Jacques de Larosière, Bank of France governor, said he saw no reason to remove banks from his supervision. Mr de Larosière said the split in Germany between a Bundesbank in charge of monetary policy and a Berlin office responsible for supervising banks was more apparent than real, since the latter institution was dependent on the former.

The French Association of Banks does not have a formal view on who should best regulate its members. Best banks seem to favour the devil they know intimately (the Bank of France), rather than one they know less well (the Trésor), or not at all (in the case of some new body).

One solution, suggested by an adviser to Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, would be to leave day-to-day bank supervision with the Bank of France, with its network of 212 branches and data base on banks and their clients.

The same network enables the central bank, its officials claim, to intervene at the first sniff of trouble. They cite the fact that the Bank of France - and the Banking Commission which Mr de Larosière chairs - stepped in to inspect the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) France in October 1990, and to forbid BCCI taking deposits from French residents in January 1991, months before that banking scandal blew up publicly.

By contrast, the Bank of France should perhaps play less of a role in the Banking Regulation Committee, of which Mr de Larosière is vice-chairman, because of the potential for divided interests. The committee sets rules which the Banking Commission enforces, among which are the level of non-interest bearing reserves which commercial banks must place with the central bank of France. "But the level of these reserves affects the central bank's profits," notes the Balladur adviser.

## Thatcher attacks UK policy on Bosnia

By Ralph Atkins in London

BARONESS Thatcher last night launched a scathing attack on government policy towards Bosnia, accusing the UK and other western countries of acting like "an accomplice to a massacre".

The former UK prime minister also condemned Mr Douglas Hurd, foreign secretary, of using "terrible and disgraceful" phrases to justify not arming Bosnian Muslims. She was "ashamed" at the European Community's reluctance to intervene.

Her ferocious outburst provoked an angry reaction from ministers and looked set to fracture the fragile unity within the Conservative party over action against Bosnian Serb aggression.

Mr Malcolm Rifkind, defence secretary, accused her of "emotional nonsense" and said arms for Bosnian Muslims, "would be used to prolong the conflict".

If the west armed one side, Russia might decide to help the Serbs, he said.

Most Tory MPs have so far been reluctant to see British troops further involved in the conflict - and Mr John Major has won a consensus within the party for a policy based on providing humanitarian aid and urging a negotiated peace settlement.

Speaking on BBC television, Baroness Thatcher said: "We can't go on with this policy - namely feeding people but leaving them to be massacred." United Nations resolutions should be overturned, she said, so the Bosnian Muslims could arm themselves.

Mr Douglas Hurd, who was last night travelling to Japan, has previously said such a policy would lead to a "level killing fields".

But Baroness Thatcher responded: "I thought it was a terrible and disgraceful phrase. There is a killing field now where the innocent haven't the requisite arms properly to defend themselves."

A policy of arming Bosnian Muslims should be backed up with air cover and possibly ground attacks, she said.



Quiet at the front: A Bosnian Serb soldier, wearing a traditional hat, passed his time reading yesterday as the ceasefire around the Moslem town of Srebrenica, which he is helping to besiege, appeared to be holding. His comrade chose to clean his gun.

## Recall of Morillon sparks row

By Alice Rawsthorn

MR Francois Léotard, the new French defence minister, yesterday sparked a political row by stating that he planned to recall General Philippe Morillon, the colourful commander of the United Nations' peace-keeping force in Bosnia.

The defence minister said on French radio that Gen Morillon, who is feted as a folk hero in France, would be given a senior military post on his return. "His human and professional qualities merit an important command," Mr Léotard said.

But United Nations officials in New York said they had heard nothing from France about the possible replacement of Gen Morillon.

A spokesman said troop rotations were normal within the UN force and certainly, as a French officer, the desires of his government would be important in this regard. But, he added: "We still have received nothing from the gov-

ernment of France regarding his replacement or a desire to replace him. And to my knowledge the secretary-general has not been in touch with him."

In Paris, Mr Léotard denied that the general was being

was being withdrawn at the request of the Serbs.

Gen Morillon, known as "Beau Geste" in France after the swashbuckling fictional Foreign Legion officer immortalised by the English novelist P.C. Wren, is a controversial figure both in France and abroad.

His admirers praise him for his courage in daring exploits such as his defence of the Srebrenica Muslims. But his detractors see him as a publicity-seeking egotist, claiming that his disregard for military procedure has caused serious problems for the rest of the UN operation in Bosnia.

● The United Nations aid airlift to Sarajevo will resume on Thursday after a five-day suspension imposed due to a threat from Serb anti-aircraft guns, a UN relief spokesman said yesterday. Reuter reports from Sarajevo. The UN has scheduled 18 flights between Sarajevo and the Croatian port of Split and the Italian port of Ancona.

Coloured commander in Bosnia not being punished, says Léotard

## Report to veto ERM reforms

SENIOR EC central bankers and treasury officials were yesterday putting the finishing touches to their report on the workings of the European exchange rate mechanism, writes Andrew Hill in Brussels.

The EC's monetary committee, meeting in Brussels, is expected to present its analysis and recommendations to finance ministers at a three-day informal council which begins on May 21 in Denmark.

The committee was asked to examine the workings of the exchange rate grid following last September's currency crisis, during which both sterling and the lira were forced out of the ERM. Yesterday's meeting was held, as always, in secret, but the committee is expected to recommend that there should be no fundamental reform of the system - in spite of calls from member states, notably Britain, that alleged "fault-lines" in the ERM should be treated.

Instead, the monetary experts believe existing rules - for example, those which allow for more frequent technical realignments of European currencies - should be applied more strictly, and earlier, to avoid speculative pressure on member currencies.

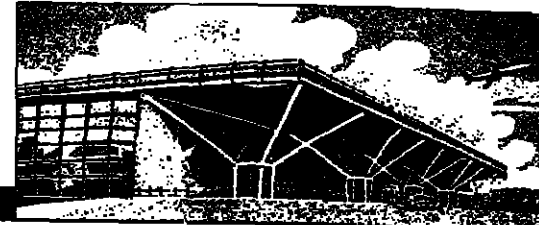
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مكتبة الرحيل

## Miners refuse to cheer for Yeltsin

By Gillian Tett in Novokuznetsk, Siberia

THE Russian president, Mr Boris Yeltsin, yesterday failed to secure the propaganda victory he sought in his first provincial visit ahead of the April 25 national referendum.

With his campaign appearing lacklustre and his reception in the Siberian mining town of Novokuznetsk distinctly lukewarm, the trip did little to convince onlookers that he had the enthusiasm for the political fight ahead.

Barely a few thousand people turned out to line the streets of the town, part of the Kuzbass region which encompasses 100 mines.

Mr Yeltsin no doubt still has the support of the region, which has long been a bastion of support for him, but the president was yesterday greeted with a barrage of strident demands both from miners and regional leaders.

Regional leaders, concerned about the future of the region's coal industry, are demanding both fresh subsidies and



President Boris Yeltsin meeting miners and their families yesterday in Siberia's Kuzbass region

greater economic autonomy from Moscow. Local miners are furious that their salaries, once among the highest in the region, have been eroded by inflation.

In a stuffy hall, packed with 400 miners, Mr Yeltsin announced that one of the largest mines in the area would embark on an experimental programme of partial privatisation, with 38 per cent of the mine's ownership to be passed from the state to the mine next month. Until now, the privatisation programme has barely touched the mining industry.

However, Mr Yeltsin insisted that he could not free the price of coal, which is currently partly controlled by the government.

"If we did that, it would lead to a social explosion," Mr Yeltsin said. The miners responded politely but without real conviction.

Mr Vladimir Lavrik, director of the Abashaskaya mine, said that without further economic reform, the mining industry

faced catastrophe. Mr Vachoslav Sharipov, leader of the mining unions, warned that unless further aid was forthcoming, the president could not rely on the support of miners.

"Presidents and governments come and go, but the union will remain here," he said.

He admitted afterwards that he was "disappointed" by Mr Yeltsin's speech, although he believed that most miners would still support the president in the referendum.

## Japan boosts aid for Russia

By Robert Thomson in Tokyo

FOREIGN and finance ministers from the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations gathered in Tokyo last night for a two-day meeting which will attempt to secure the leadership of Russian President Boris Yeltsin by providing his country with another substantial aid package.

The pressure on Japan, as host, to give generously was reflected in a government decision to increase its planned bilateral assistance from \$1.2bn to \$1.8bn (£1.2bn) which includes trade insurance, humanitarian aid, and technological assistance to the Russian nuclear industry.

Japan's assistance is expected to be announced today in an address by Mr Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister, who has made clear to other participants that Tokyo will not formally raise the contentious issue of the Kurile Islands.

The islands, which were occupied by Soviet troops in 1945, are claimed by Japan.

Apart from Russia, foreign ministers are expected to discuss the United Nations peace-keeping operation in Cambodia, threatened by increasing violence, and the continuing conflict in Bosnia.

They are also expected to discuss North Korea's announced pull-out from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Finance ministers will hold their first session this afternoon, and discuss the state of the international economy. Mr Yoshiro Hayashi, Japan's finance minister, intends to explain the stimulatory package announced yesterday and

hopes to prompt discussion on the rapid appreciation of the yen.

But Japanese officials expect that the US and other G7 members will have little sympathy for Tokyo's concerns that the yen's movement could put extra pressure on the country's export industries.

Instead, of focusing just on the yen's rise, Japanese officials plan to argue in favour of "currency stability".

Bilateral meetings with Mr Andrei Kozyrev, the Russian foreign minister, will be held by individual countries today, but the group discussion of assistance to Moscow is scheduled to begin tomorrow morning.

It is expected that a final package will total around \$3bn, but that figure includes already negotiated debt relief

and credit extensions from the International Monetary Fund.

Mr Kabun Muto, Japan's foreign minister, said yesterday that the quality of aid was important. He intends to emphasise the need for increased assistance for the restructuring of Russian companies and will reflect Tokyo's concerns about pouring large, poorly targeted amounts of money into a "black hole".

Meanwhile, Mr Warren Christopher, the US secretary of state, said the ministers had come to Tokyo on a "noble mission": "That is, to determine how the world's industrialised democracies can best unite together to support the historic struggle of the Russian people to build a free society and a vibrant economy."

Japan's economic package, Page 4

## Doubt thrown on Start-2 approval

By Leyla Boulton in Moscow

THE Start-2 disarmament treaty became the latest political football in Russia's pre-referendum electioneering, when Mr Ruslan Khasbulatov, parliamentary speaker, yesterday said deputies would not ratify it until the foreign minister was sacked.

"First of all this treaty should be submitted by a minister of foreign affairs who enjoys the respect and trust of society. As long as there is no such minister, I think it is absurd to even talk about Start-2," he said.

Mr Andrei Kozyrev, the foreign minister, one of the architects of the treaty slashing US

and Russian nuclear arsenals, is hated by conservatives for his pro-western policies.

Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, and Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk yesterday signed a friendship and mutual assistance treaty in Kiev with the clear intention of forming a political

front against Russia, writes Chrystia Freeland in Kiev.

Mr Shevardnadze said Ukraine had agreed to act as a peacekeeper in the Georgian region of Abkhazia, where government forces are fighting separatists. He added that Ukraine and Georgia might co-operate in producing armaments and training soldiers.

## Little comfort for Moscow in Cossack land

Chrystia Freeland finds dismay and yearnings for autonomy

IN MOSCOW, the on-going struggle between Russian president Boris Yeltsin and the Congress of People's Deputies is often painted as a showdown between the forces of good - Mr Yeltsin and his reform team - and the forces of evil - the ex-communist legislature.

But along the fertile banks of the Don river, once home to the free-booting Cossacks who defended Imperial Russia's periphery, the contest, and the referendum on April 25, which is meant to decide its outcome, are cast in a different light.

"All that the referendum represents is a choice between Bolsheviks and Communists," says Vladimir Dzhambitkov. "They are all from the old system and are merely fighting among themselves for power."

A 32-year-old private businessman dressed in the leather jacket, blue jeans and Reeboks of Russia's nouveaux riches, Mr Dzhambitkov represents what should be Mr Yeltsin's key constituency - the nascent bourgeoisie.

But, like many of the citizens of Rostov-on-Don walking past the city's Lenin statue on their way home from work, Mr Dzhambitkov is so disgusted by his country's politics that he does not intend to vote.

The same disenchantment prevails amid the emerald green fields of winter wheat in the Rostov region countryside.

"I will vote for anyone but Yeltsin," says Mr Alexander Martynenko, the 52-year-old head of one of the work teams at the "Ilych's [as in Vladimir Ilych Lenin] Testament" farm 50 miles south of Rostov-on-Don. "All that presidential rule has given us is a new layer of bureaucrats who are like blood-suckers on the people."

Even Yeltsin supporters no longer display the enthusiasm which inspired 70 per cent of Rostov-on-Don's eligible voters to back Mr Yeltsin in the presidential elections 18 months ago.

Irina, a smartly dressed 21-year-old accountant in the municipal government, says: "I will probably vote for Yeltsin. He is the best of two evils."

This pervasive disillusionment is bad news for Mr Yeltsin. Earlier this month Mr Yeltsin dropped plans to hold his own plebiscite and agreed to face a much tougher referendum set by the congress. The congress's poll includes one potentially crippling condition: to win, Mr Yeltsin needs the support of 50 per cent of registered voters, not just a simple majority.

The mood in Rostov-on-Don, which ranges from outright hostility toward Mr Yeltsin to lukewarm support, suggests the Russian president may be unable to clear the congress's hurdle.

This is a possibility which Mr Mikhail Gaychuk, deputy head of the regional legislature, forecasts with evident glee.

"I think that there will not be a high enough voter turnout to give the referendum legal validity," Mr Gaychuk

said, sitting beneath a black-and-white portrait of Lenin. "And if the referendum is not valid, the congress will be proven right and Mr Yeltsin will have thrown money to the winds."

One flight of stairs away, in the massive white building which houses the various layers of government in Rostov oblast (province), Mr Vladimir Chub, head of the regional executive and thus a Yeltsin appointee, is rooting for the president.

Mr Chub thinks that Mr Yeltsin can win the required support of 50 per cent of eligible voters - but only if a massive election campaign is launched immediately.

Yet even Mr Yeltsin's man on the Don poses a potential threat to Moscow. A proud descendant of the Cossacks, who ran the region through their own social and political structures before 1917 in exchange for fighting for the Tsar, Mr Chub sympathises with the demands of modern Cossack organisations for greater local autonomy.

Mr Chub thinks that Rostov oblast should be granted the same rights accorded to the autonomous republics which make up the Russian federation.

This bid for regional devolution of power could, in the long run, be even more dangerous for Mr Yeltsin than a defeat in the referendum.

Local leaders are aware that they possess a powerful bargaining chip. Rostov oblast, which produces between 7m and 8m tonnes of grain annually, is Russia's leading supplier of grain. Since the collapse of the former Soviet Union, which deprived Russia of control over Ukraine and Kazakhstan, its traditional granaries, Rostov's fertile steppes have become more critical than ever.

If grain is Rostov's trump card, the Cossacks are the regional wild card. According to Cossack activists, nearly 2m young men in southern Russia have registered as Cossacks. In the spirit of their warrior ancestors, these modern Cossacks have rushed to the armed defence of Russians against non-Slavs in hot-spots such as the Trans-Dniestr region of Moldova.

At home in Rostov-on-Don, they strut through the streets sporting the wild moustaches favoured by Cossacks of old and tsarist uniforms. Public sentiment in the riverside town is decidedly hostile toward these gun-toting, vodka-swilling defenders of the Orthodox faith.

But they appear to have struck a chord with Mr Yeltsin, who last month issued a presidential decree recognising Cossack organisations. The decree was promptly struck down by the congress.

As a result, the Cossacks say they will back the president in the referendum. But it is another reason some citizens of Rostov-on-Don cite when explaining why they plan to vote against Mr Yeltsin.

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## JAPANESE ECONOMIC MEASURES

# Japan package well wrapped, but is it the goods?

Large and impeccable in its timing, the quality is nonetheless open to debate, writes Robert Thomson

WHEN the Japanese government unveiled its economic package yesterday to a fanfare of surging stock prices, there were broad smiles of self-satisfaction among political leaders and bureaucrats.

They had fashioned a package larger than promised, and delivered it just as two senior US officials landed in Tokyo for a meeting of the Group of Seven leading industrial countries.

Japan is often criticised for getting the timing of its big announcements wrong, as a sluggish bureaucracy works in its own, isolated time zone. But the timing of yesterday's announcement, politically and economically, could not be faulted, prompting Mr Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister, to declare that the period of economic decline was over.

However, the quality of the package's content is open to

debate, and the finance ministry's forecast that the ¥13,200bn (\$76bn) in spending and tax concessions will produce an extra 2.6 per cent of nominal gross national product growth is certainly questionable.

The Sakura Research Institute estimates that it will add 1.3 per cent, Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank 1.3 per cent and Baring Securities 0.8 per cent - and "that's generous".

Mr Yasushi Mieno, governor of the Bank of Japan, has repeatedly suggested that the economy is weighed down by sluggish consumer demand and corporate capital investment. And the finance ministry, which agreed on the final total after a hard night's negotiation with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, admits that there is not much direct stimulation in those areas.

There is ¥520bn in extra funds to government-affiliated

institutions for the promotion of private equipment investment, and a tax concession for home buyers, who will have the maximum amount of deductible loan repayments lifted by 20 per cent.

But a cut in income taxes was not included, and a finance ministry official said that there is no prospect of a tax cut this year.

Most Japanese manufacturers are in the midst of restructuring, in particular, cuts in capacity and a trimming of bloated workforces. They have limited room for an increase in capital spending, which was highlighted by a 15.9 per cent year-on-year fall in private machinery orders in February. Nevertheless, consumers appear to have the means but not the confidence to increase spending, as was shown by a 6.1 per cent fall in department store sales during February.

On hearing of the package's

contents, the Japan Department Stores Association said the absence of a tax cut was "very disappointing", and final demand was likely to remain weak for the indefinite future.

Other business groups were

was ideal, and would stimulate demand.

The euphoria surrounding the announcement yesterday, combined with the stock market's recovery, have also given LDP officials the impression

**Bank of Japan loan figures for March released yesterday suggest that, instead of providing a quick fix, the package will be part of a long-haul recovery**

more enthusiastic. The Association of Corporate Executives said the "economy has already shown signs of recovery and the package will ensure that recovery".

The Federation of Employers' Associations said the timing, coming immediately after the passing of the 1993 budget,

that the immediate economic future is bright. But a separate set of Bank of Japan loan figures for March released yesterday suggest that, instead of providing a quick fix, the package will be part of a long-haul recovery.

Outstanding commercial bank loans expanded by only

1.3 per cent in March, the slowest growth on record, and a sign that banks are either wary of fresh lending or that corporate demand for funds is still in decline. The most likely explanation is a mix of both causes. Private economists expect money supply, which expanded by 0.2 per cent in February, to shrink again in March.

"The economy is bumping along the bottom," said Mr Geoffrey Barker, economist at Baring Securities. "The package will help, but you are not going to see all the growth this year, and a lot of the money is recycled rather than new. But the increase in funds for the Housing Loan Corporation will make a difference." The Housing Loan Corporation provides a third of all mortgages in Japan, and the package increased the funds available this year from ¥7,283bn to ¥9,253bn, and pro-

vides for a reduction in interest rates from 4.3 per cent to 4.1 per cent. At the same time, ¥1.6bn in land for public projects will be purchased ahead of schedule.

It is expected that the lending measures will increase demand for new homes, but the package will provide little assistance to banks, burdened with about ¥30,000bn in bad property loans - most of which are linked to speculative developments outside the range of the Housing Loan Corporation.

In presenting the package, the finance ministry suggested that almost all the funds were "fresh water", but the reliance on the Fiscal Investment and Loan Programme (FILP), funded by postal savings, of the total means that much of the money is being recycled more quickly rather than genuinely fresh. The combination of FILP

funds, which would otherwise be used for government bond purchases or for loans to government financial institutions, and funds to be provided by local governments totals ¥8,900bn, leaving the central government to muster the remaining money. Finance ministry officials said construction bonds were likely to be used to fill the gap.

But the use of construction bonds, which are supposed to be used only for infrastructure spending, raises awkward questions about spending for "social infrastructure", listed at ¥1,150bn. US officials will be told that US companies could provide this infrastructure, which apparently includes supercomputers and other sophisticated electronics, though construction bonds are not supposed to be used for such equipment.

See editorial comment

## Officials keep a wary eye on the bubble

By Emiko Terazono in Tokyo

IN OTEMACHI, Tokyo's business centre, office workers crowded around a stock price board in a Yamachi Securities branch yesterday as the Nikkei average closed above the psychologically important 20,000 mark for the first time in over a year.

The renewed enthusiasm for stocks coincided with the release of the government's emergency package yesterday, and the talk now is not how far the Nikkei average will fall but how much it will surge in coming days.

However, the sudden change in sentiment has a dark side.

Apart from sending most issues flickering higher on the electronic boards in brokerages around the country yesterday, the package has also intensified concern over the possibility of a resurgence of an asset "bubble" last seen in the late 1980s.

Government officials claim that they are keeping close watch over any signs of an asset bubble.

"We've formulated the package after closely reviewing what happened in 1986," said Mr Yoseki Nagase, director general at the Economic Planning Agency.

The comparisons, however, are compelling.

Interest rates then were cut to historical lows, and a ¥6,000bn (\$35bn) emergency economic package was introduced in 1986 to help companies recover from a strengthening yen.

But Mr Nagase argues that the current economic back-

ground is very different from the mid-1980s, when money supply was posting double digit gains and stock and property prices were also surging. "Capital investment and consumer demand will not be able to recover without assistance," he added.

However, the latest stimulatory package comes at a time when some analysts believe that some statistics have indicated a bottoming out of the economy.

A 23 per cent rise in the stock market over the past two months has restored confidence in the country's brokers,

advance land purchases for public works.

Limits on housing loans provided by quasi-governmental housing loan organisations will now be raised, while lending rates on the loans will be lowered.

There are also fears of overheating due to a bunching of the government's infrastructure projects.

The full effects of the public works projects from last August's ¥10,700bn emergency package have yet to be felt fully, as the government expects the bulk of the projects to be started

**Release of the government's emergency package yesterday prompted talk not of how far the Nikkei average will fall but how much it will surge in coming days**

who are now urging investors to return to the market or risk missing out on a chance of making a quick profit.

The recovery in share prices will aid Japanese companies, which have been forced to write off losses on their stock portfolios.

According to stockbrokers Kleinwort Benson in Tokyo, a 15 per cent rise in the stock market theoretically creates about ¥45,000bn of financial wealth.

With the stock market higher, the package may help inflate property prices, another "bubble" characteristic.

The package includes a total of ¥1,600bn to be pumped into the property market through

in this financial year.

Additionally, the government intends to front-load 75 per cent, or ¥12,200bn worth, of public works contracts for the current year's usual budget into the April-June quarter.

While government officials flatly reject suggestions of another asset bubble emerging, they admit that they are also aware of the implications of low interest rates and large fiscal stimulus.

"But we are able to learn from experience," said Mr Nagase.

"In the 1970s we managed to handle the second oil shock from our experience of the first one."

## Japanese trade surplus for 1992 rises to \$111bn

By Robert Thomson in Tokyo

JAPAN'S trade surplus for fiscal 1992, which ended last month, rose 26.2 per cent to \$111.44bn (\$73bn) as the slowing of the economy led to weaker demand for imports and a widening of the country's bilateral surpluses with the European Community and the US.

The Japanese government is hoping that yesterday's announcement of a new stimulatory package will defuse criticism of the surplus. However, finance ministry officials admitted that import demand is unlikely to recover quickly in the coming months.

Japan's customs-cleared imports from the US fell 2.4 per cent to \$52.3bn, while exports to the US were 7 per cent higher at \$68.4bn. Exports to the EC rose 2.9 per cent to \$61.5bn and imports from the EC were down 2.6 per cent at \$30.3bn, while total exports were 7.4 per cent higher and imports grew 0.3 per cent.

The surplus had peaked in 1986 at \$89.7bn, falling to \$54.3bn in 1990, but it has expanded rapidly over the past two years as the domestic economy stalled, creating international pressure on the government to rekindle growth.

But the expansion is not over yet. For the month of March, the surplus increased 26 per cent to \$13.78bn, after a 15.4 per cent rise in exports and a 9.4 per cent lift in imports.

Seasonally adjusted, the surplus was \$9.98bn, down from \$10.19bn in February.

The Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) said that the yen's appreciation was responsible for much of the increase, as the average yen-dollar rate last month was ¥117.84 compared with ¥130.78 last year. Yen-based exports were only 4 per cent higher during the month, and imports were 1.1 per cent lower than a year earlier.

Japanese officials are concerned that the recent rapid appreciation of the yen will push the surplus higher over the next couple of months, before yesterday's package has time to take effect. They are also conscious that the new US administration may see a continuing rise in the surplus as a sign that Japan must be pressed for further market-opening concessions.

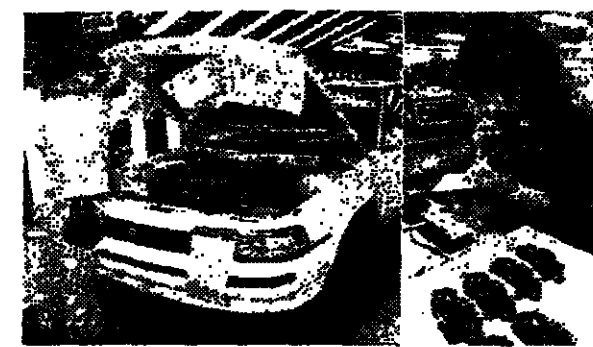
The figures reflect the changing patterns of Japanese trade.

Exports to China during the year were 36.4 per cent higher and imports from that country expanded by 20.1 per cent, while exports to Russia fell 35.3 per cent and imports were down 21.5 per cent.

The China boom continued during the month of March, when exports from Japan rose 57.1 per cent on the same month last year, and imports were 32.3 per cent higher, lifting that country above Taiwan and South Korea among Japan's trading partners, and putting it second only to the US.

During March, exports of transport machinery, mostly cars, rose 23.5 per cent and those of general machinery were 15.4 per cent higher. The strongest import growth was in mineral fuels, up 15.8 per cent, and machinery, up 10.4 per cent.

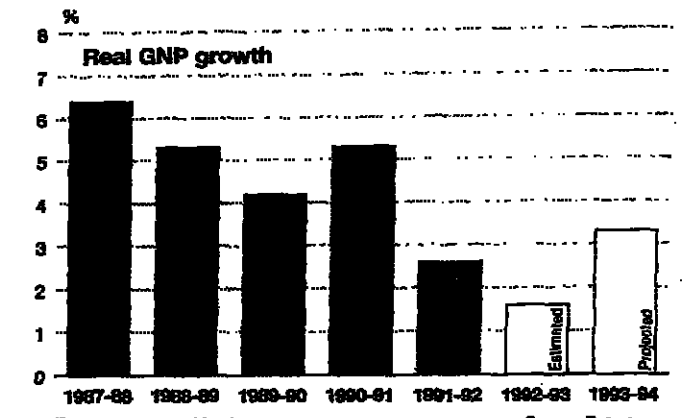
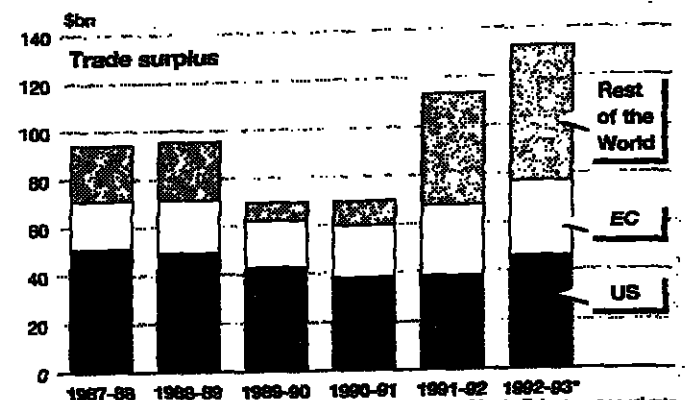
## Japan: making adjustments



The economic package's size and effect

	April 1993 measures (¥trn)	August 1992 measures (¥trn)
Increase in public investment		
Public works	4,170	4,450
Investment in education & social welfare	1,150	550
Investment by local government	3,600	2,800
Housing loans	1,800	800
	10,820	8,600
Lending by financial institutions		
Measures for small and medium-sized firms	1,910	1,200
Promotion of private equipment investment	920	900
	2,830	2,100
Total	13,650	10,700
Multipplier effect in per cent of GNP	2.6%	2.4%

Source: Ministry of Finance



Tokyo share traders gesticulate as the Nikkei soars above 20,000 on news of the government's economic stimulus yesterday

## Tokyo polishes trade defence

By Michio Nakamoto and Emiko Terazono

AS senior US officials arrived in Tokyo yesterday, the Japanese government was preparing its defence on trade and proudly displayed yesterday's fiscal stimulus package.

The massive US trade deficit with Japan has kept American politicians, industrialists and academics busy debating a variety of measures to deal with the problem. Mr Warren Christopher, US secretary of state, yesterday said Japan needed to commit itself to solving individual trade issues.

His comment reflects the favoured approach in Washington lately, which has been for the US and Japan to set quantifiable import targets for specific market sectors. However, Japan has been arguing for a macro-economic approach to reducing its trade surplus.

Mr Lloyd Bentsen, US treasury secretary, in Tokyo for the G7 meeting, acknowledged Japan's efforts to stimulate domestic demand for foreign products, but added that the country was in a good position to be able to do a great deal in spurring economic growth because of its sound fiscal position and huge external surplus.

In reply, Japan's trade ministry claimed that the package would boost faltering domestic demand and reduce the trade surplus. Mr Noboru Hatakeyama, vice-minister for interna-

tional affairs at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) said: "If the US is concerned about the trade imbalance, I think the economic package of this size will be enough."

Aside from trying to support demand through public investment projects, the package includes measures to promote imports by cutting interest rates on loans by public financial institutions for sales of imported goods. Limits on loans to foreign companies by

the Export Import Bank of Japan are to be raised and the government also pledged procurement of foreign products for facility investments.

The government said the measures could boost the country's imports by more than \$8bn (\$5.9bn). It has also tried to assure the US that foreign manufacturers would get a fair share of the new public procurement.

However, Japan has been careful not to set a fixed goal for public purchases of foreign

goods, and Mr Hatakeyama said the government's purchases would be determined by open bidding. "Although many import-friendly items are included in the government procurement plan, there is absolutely no room for us to agree to the 'goal' approach because it leads to misunderstanding and managed trade," he said.

Japan's frictions over the semiconductor arrangement with the US prompted its cautious stance towards quantifiable targets. In the semiconductor arrangement the two countries agreed that the US expected to see the foreign share of the Japanese semiconductor market rise to 20 per cent by the end of 1992. While Japan insisted that the market share figure was no more than an expectation, the US side interpreted it as a commitment by Japan.

Meanwhile, the Japanese government claimed that a factor which would offset its efforts to boost the economy was the further strengthening of the yen. The US is seen to favour a higher yen to reduce Japan's exports, but Mr Hatakeyama warned that an "excessively rapid rise would reduce the impact of the economic measures. Although Japan was in a position to accept the long-term appreciation of the yen, 'too drastic an appreciation of the yen is not good for our economy,' he said.

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## Nigeria acts to forestall poll unrest

By Paul Adams in Lagos

NIGERIA'S ruling military council has postponed removal of the fuel price subsidy, due on June 1, to avoid unrest in the run-up to presidential elections on June 12.

A cut in the subsidy is seen as vital for an agreement with the International Monetary Fund, which began its mission to Nigeria yesterday.

The postponement is a setback for the civilian Transitional Council, which has pledged to cut the budget deficit to help get an early IMF agreement, a pre-condition for rescheduling the country's external debt.

The move follows persistent threats of strikes and riots. An official statement after a weekend meeting at the federal capital of Abuja said there would be "no new pricing of petroleum products" on June 1. "The government remains committed to ensuring that nothing is done to impede the progress of the transition" to elected civilian rule, it added.

The meeting was chaired by President Ibrahim Babangida and included his Vice-President, Admiral Augustus Abacha, defence minister, Mr Ernest Shonekan, leader of the transitional council, and Mr Philip Asiodu, oil secretary.

Mr Shonekan, one of Nigeria's leading businessmen,

has been frustrated in his attempts to instil fiscal discipline, achieve a market rate for foreign exchange and stimulate private sector investment.

Hopes raised by the 1993 budget and other policy statements have turned to disillusionment, as Mr Shonekan appears powerless to resist military intervention in his reforms.

The proposed rise in fuel prices by more than 500 per cent to import parity was also designed to halt smuggling and provide money for maintenance of refineries and distribution systems.

Fuel shortages, which have afflicted the north for weeks, spread to the commercial capital, Lagos, over the weekend when a fire closed a depot.

Petrol riots are not the only potential threat to peaceful civilian handover. Allegations of misconduct at last month's election of presidential candidates have rekindled demands that the handover be delayed for the fourth time in three years and the National Electoral Commission has made the elections conditional on its screening of presidential running mates, yet to be chosen by the two Moslem candidates.

Tension between Moslems and Christians in the north have risen since military courts sentenced more than a dozen Christians to death over religious riots last year.

## Hong Kong travels down a familiar path

Simon Holberton reports on the sense of déjà vu over Patten's plans for electoral reform

IT IS possible, just possible, to interpret yesterday's announcement of Sino-British talks on Hong Kong's political future as a victory for Mr Chris Patten, the colony's governor.

China backed down on its pre-condition that his package of proposals for the colony's 1994-95 elections be dropped before talks could begin. It also appears to have backed down on its objection to Hong Kong government officials being members of the British team.

By standing firm on these "principles", Mr Patten may have won concessions from a government which does not concede ground lightly. But then again, he may not.

The prospect of talks is not one which fills many in the Hong Kong government with confidence. Hong Kong has been down this road before and, if the past is a guide, the future could be bleak.

"To quote Samuel Goldwyn, 'it feels like déjà vu all over again'", one official noted yesterday. Another spoke of the "crimp and mire" of talks.

The Chinese government wants these talks, much more than Mr Patten does, for a number of reasons. The most important is that talks re-establish the precedent of China and Britain deciding the fate of Hong Kong.

The thought of Mr Patten's plans for a more democratic method of electing members to the Legislative Council (LegCo), the colony's law

making body, being decided by LegCo alone filled Beijing with dread. It would have established a precedent, just four years from the transfer of sovereignty, of Hong Kong deciding something without the blessing of its future sovereign.

This fear, on China's part, is perhaps Mr Patten's strongest card in his otherwise rather weak hand. He can, if the negotiation appears fruitless, take his leave and present his package to LegCo. The Chinese, once bitten by Mr Patten's "surprise" decision to gazette his legislation on March 12, are, however, likely to be twice shy. They will not easily provide him with reason to withdraw.

The talks also put the issue into a forum in which China has displayed mastery in the past. One only has to look at the Hong Kong's long drawn

### HK has been down this road before and, if the past is a guide, the future could be bleak

out attempt to build a new airport to see that China is the master of fudge and delay if it does not get what it wants.

A memorandum of understanding, signed by the UK and Chinese prime ministers in September 1991, has



Chris Patten, Hong Kong Governor, (left) meets the press at the British Foreign Office yesterday. With him is Alastair Goodlad, foreign office minister

ten's package are: an electoral college, which will return 10 members of LegCo in 1995, which consists of democratically elected local officials; and nine "functional" constituencies which would be elected by Hong Kong's working population of 2.7m.

What is much less well known is China's position. Aside from heaping derision on Mr Patten for his "three violations" - China claims Mr Patten's blueprint runs counter to the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, the 1991 Basic Law, and a series of exchanges between foreign ministers in early 1990 - Beijing has yet to deliver itself of its proposals for the 1995 polls.

The talks will hinge, therefore, on two factors: what proposals for the 1995 elections Beijing brings to the table, and whether it is able to accept the deadline for enactment of enabling legislation by the summer, or autumn at the latest.

Mr Patten's public remarks suggest that he believes China wants to rig the election. He has trumpeted in Brussels and London over the past week his determination to see elections that are "clean" - a condition he has made synonymous with Britain's national honour.

China has never much been concerned with British honour. But what Mr Patten has to hope is that Beijing has an interest in settling the issue on reasonable terms, and on that he would not be wanting to bet very much money.

## S Africa braced for mass strike

By Patti Waldmeir in Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA braced for potential violence during today's planned mass strike called by the African National Congress to mourn the weekend assassination of guerrilla leader Mr Chris Hani.

Obviously worried by the risk of violence, the largest employer organisation, the South African Chamber of Business (Sacob), issued an unusually conciliatory statement urging employers to handle the tense situation with sensitivity. A Sacob official urged no disciplinary action be taken against employees failing to attend work.

"An understanding attitude on the part of employers can contribute to the maintenance of stability and lessening of tension. Employers should be flexible in applying the 'no-work, no-pay' principle today the organisation said, pointing out that the stayaway could mean employees would be unable to attend work for lack of transport.

Yesterday, the first day of the ANC's planned campaign of "rolling mass action" passed off tense but with little violence, though there were incidents of unrest in the eastern Cape. Police declared many parts of the province "unrest areas," involving night curfews and a ban on weapons. However, they reported no deaths and said the situation was under control.

A small demonstration was held outside the Boksburg magistrate's court where the alleged assassin, Mr Janusz Walus, appeared. He was remanded in custody until May 12.

In another South African court, charges were withdrawn against 27 of 74 men accused of involvement in last year's Boipatong massacre, another big political event which led to a nine-month suspension of constitutional talks. Dismissal of the charges against these men could exacerbate angry reaction to the Hani assassination.

Police are to deploy 23,000 men to maintain order during today's strike.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

## Rabin set to make concession on talks

MR Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, is expected to tell President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt today that Israel is prepared to allow a prominent Arab resident of Jerusalem to participate in a Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, Judy Maltz reports from Jerusalem.

The Israeli and Egyptian leaders will hold a one-day summit in Ismailia, where discussions will focus on ways of reviving Middle East peace talks, stalled since December, when the Jewish state expelled 415 Palestinians to South Lebanon.

Israel is hoping its decision to allow Palestinian leader, Faisal al-Husseini, a resident of East Jerusalem, to participate will convince the Palestinian delegation to drop their ultimatum that all the deportees be repatriated before it returns to negotiations. The next round of talks has been scheduled to be held in Washington on April 20, although none of the Arab countries nor the Palestinian delegation has yet confirmed their participation.

Reuter adds from Tyre: Pro-Iranian guerrillas killed three Israeli soldiers in a bomb ambush yesterday in the worst blow against Israeli forces in Lebanon in six months, security sources said.

## Modest rise in Indian exports

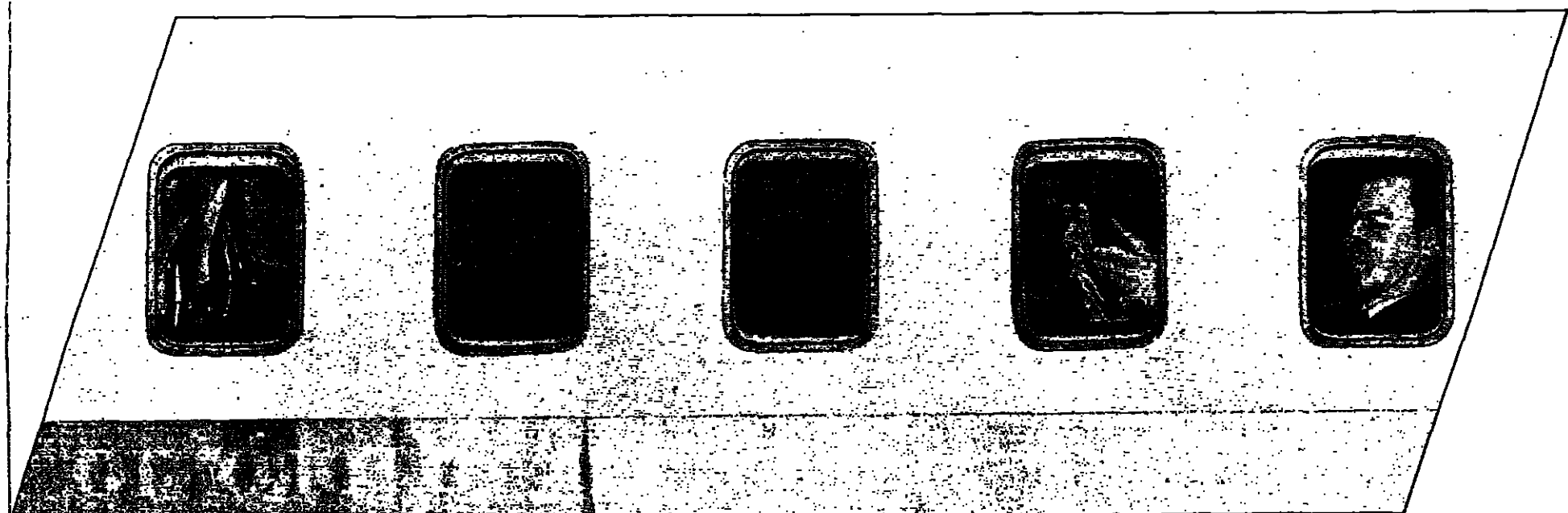
India's exports, which fell in December and January due to the disruption caused by inter-religious riots, rose in February as businessmen sought to regain lost ground, according to figures announced yesterday, Stefan Wagstyl reports from New Delhi.

However, the recovery was only moderate in scale, indicating that much of the export revenue lost in the previous two months has been lost for good, as foreign buyers found alternative sources of supply. Exports in February rose 8.1 per cent to \$1.76bn (\$1.2bn) compared with the same month last year. Imports fell slightly to \$1.69bn, as companies delayed purchases of capital equipment and other supplies in anticipation of import duty cuts announced in the mid-February budget.

## Vietnam denies POW claim

Vietnam yesterday flatly rejected a report suggesting that it held over the number of American prisoners it was holding shortly before the US withdrawal from Indochina in 1973. Reuter reports from Hanoi. It also denied it was still holding any prisoners.

The issue, which flared up with disclosure of a document found in Moscow archives and said to be from the North Vietnamese army, looked likely to delay efforts to reconcile Hanoi and Washington 18 years after the Vietnam war ended. Vietnamese officials said every time a breakthrough appeared imminent in relations with the US, forces in Washington opposed to reconciliation threw a spanner in the works.



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## Trinidad dollar sinks after float

By Canute James  
in Port of Spain

THE Trinidad and Tobago dollar fell 26 per cent against the US dollar yesterday when currency markets reopened following a government announcement that the currency was being floated.

The rate, which has been fixed at 4.25 to the US dollar since 1989, is being determined by commercial banks and licensed foreign exchange dealers, according to Mr Wendell Mottley, finance minister.

The central bank said foreign reserves were "under pressure because of debt servicing obligations and flight of capital" from the country. "As long as the reserves remain low, and as long as economic activity and business confidence continues to be depressed, there will be speculation about a possible devaluation, leading in turn to capital flight," it said. An average US\$200m in capital left Trinidad and Tobago every year between 1986 and 1991, it added.

The Caribbean republic's economy is 70 per cent dependent on its petroleum industry. Foreign debt stands at US\$2.3bn.

Yesterday's exchange rate was agreed in advance by the government and the commercial banks, and was set slightly above that prevailing on the growing unofficial foreign currency market.

Bankers said yesterday that they expected fluctuations in the exchange rate later this week when levels of supply and demand became clear.

Mr Terrence Farrell, deputy governor of the central bank, said: "What one is striving for is a regime that is flexible, with the rate moving from day to day, from week to week, but that generally, the rate will be moving to what I call a zone of stability."

There would not be "wild and large fluctuations" as happened in other countries, he said.

# Canada's provinces get the borrowing habit

Capital markets are concerned at ever-rising deficits, writes Bernard Simon

WOOD GUNDY, the Canadian securities firm, arranges regular conference calls to bring clients up to date on economic trends. The speakers at two briefings earlier this month, however, were not Wood Gundy's own economists but the finance ministers of the provinces of Newfoundland and New Brunswick.

Their presence is evidence that the 10 provinces' priority these days is to impress international capital markets, rather than woo voters with lower taxes or expanded public services.

The reason is summed up by Mr Bill Jones, director of capital markets in Saskatchewan: "More and more investors have some concerns about what is happening to the provincial credit situation." The capital markets' influence has been evident since the start of the annual provincial budget season in mid-March.

Of the five provinces which have tabled budgets so far, four (Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, Manitoba and New Brunswick) have included spending cuts.

Although Newfoundland's Liberal government faces an election next month, the budget included cuts in civil service pay, a commitment not to build any new schools and delays in construction of medical clinics.

"Once upon a time it was possible to do a budget with election goodies. We didn't have that luxury," the finance minister, Mr Winston Baker, said.

In Saskatchewan, the provincial sales tax was raised from 8 to 9 per cent. Spending on education will be trimmed by 4 per cent, and the days of free dental care for schoolchildren are over. The government promised to eliminate the provincial deficit, totalling almost C\$600m (\$314m) in the year to March 31 1993, within the next four years.

Similar measures are expected when the other provinces table their 1993/94 budgets over the next two months. Quebec has already asked its civil servants to accept a two-year pay freeze.

Ontario's Social-Democrat government, faced with a jump in its deficit from C\$10bn to as much as C\$17bn, is trying to persuade trade unions to accept pay cuts or face lay-offs.

Canada's ratio of federal and provincial debt to GDP has soared from 54 per cent in 1981 to 92 per cent last year. While the provinces accounted for less than 10 per cent of the total in the early 1980s, they now make up about 41 per cent. Their combined borrow-

ing requirements exceeded that of the federal government for the first time in the 1991/92 fiscal year.

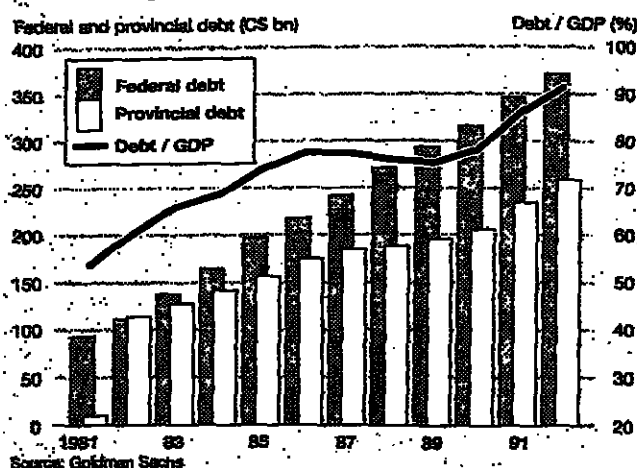
The recession is only partly to blame for the deterioration. Growth in corporate and personal tax revenues has slowed in line with the overall economy. On the other side of the equation, demands have grown for higher spending, especially on welfare.

But Mr Stephen Dufour, associate director at Standard & Poor's, the New York rating agency, warns that "there is a substantial component of these deficits which will not go away once economic growth resumes".

The drop in Canada's annual inflation rate to about 2 per cent means that governments cannot rely on higher prices to produce growth in sales taxes, or rising wages to push individual taxpayers into higher tax brackets. Furthermore, companies' efforts to contain the size of their workforces could hold down revenues from the payroll taxes which fund some provinces' healthcare budgets.

The new-found enthusiasm for fiscal austerity reflects a growing public awareness of the implications of a rising debt burden.

### Canada: public sector debt



Mr John Crow, governor of the Bank of Canada, last month identified public-sector debt as a drag on economic recovery. He said that a disciplined approach to public finances "needs to continue if Canada is to generate the increased savings to finance adequately its investment needs".

Furthermore, investors in Canadian provincial bonds are demanding higher interest rates relative to other borrow-

ers. Ontario, whose credit rating has been cut twice in the past two years, was able to sell its long-term bonds in the mid-1980s at yields of 40 basis points, or 40/100ths of a percentage point, above comparable Canadian government issues. Those bonds now trade at a "spread" of 92-93 basis points.

S&P has four provinces - Alberta, New Brunswick, Ontario and Quebec - on "negative outlook", which implies another

possible downgrade within the next year or so.

While the most visible belt-tightening in the budgets consists of cuts to specific programmes and higher taxes, each level of government is trying to force the toughest decisions on to the next level down.

Provincial treasurers complain loudly about cuts in transfer payments from the federal government in Ottawa.

The provinces, in turn, are putting the squeeze on local authorities. Ontario, for instance, plans to raise its transfers to municipalities, hospitals and schools by 2 per cent in the year to March 31 1994, but to take back the entire increase the following year.

Mr Ted Carmichael, senior economist at Burns Fry in Toronto, says that Canada's tax competitiveness for foreign investors could be eroded as municipalities are forced to municipalities to raise taxes, which are not sensitive to corporate profitability or personal income.

How long the ardour for austerity will last is open to question. Last year's combined provincial deficit of C\$35bn was a quarter higher than original projections.

The federal government has consistently failed to meet its deficit-reduction targets over the past eight years. This year's deficit, estimated at C\$34-C\$35bn, will be almost the same as it was in the year after the Conservative government came to office in 1985.

Economists believe that the only way to make a meaningful dent in budget deficits is to overhaul some of the cornerstones of Canada's social security net, such as generous welfare payments and the government-funded healthcare system. Healthcare makes up about a third of provincial spending.

Some provinces are inching towards fundamental reforms, such as introducing user fees for medical services and linking welfare payments to job training. The federal government last year eliminated cash "family allowances" paid to upper-income taxpayers. Ottawa is also eager to gain tighter control over the provinces' budget-making process.

But even in the present climate of restraint, any tampering with health and social security benefits or provincial powers carries enormous political risks. Mr Dufour says that "one may wish to be optimistic, but political realities sometimes do not allow measures to be taken which achieve substantial results."

## Collor denies role in attempted bribery

BRAZIL'S former president, Mr Fernando Collor, has denied involvement in an alleged attempt to bribe the attorney general into dropping criminal charges against him, according to Brazilian television, Reuters reports from Brasilia.

Mr Collor gave a 15-minute deposition before a federal judge on Monday, the O Globo television programme reported. A businessman, Mr Wanderley de Oliveira, has been charged in the case. "I've never even seen the man", O Globo quoted the ex-president as saying outside the hearing room. The proceedings were closed to the press.

Mr de Oliveira is alleged to have attempted to offer \$50m to Mr Aristides Junqueira, attorney general, last November to drop criminal charges against Mr

Collor while he was still president. Mr Junqueira has charged Mr Collor with passive corruption and forming a criminal group as part of an alleged influence-peddling scheme. He faces trial before the Supreme Court.

The attorney general has claimed in interviews that Mr de Oliveira had told one of his aides the money was being put up by "persons employed to defend Collor". Mr Collor, 43, resigned at the start of his Senate impeachment trial in December and was replaced by his vice-president, Mr Itamar Franco.

Mr Collor's wife Rosane had also been due to make a statement to the hearing on Monday about charges that she used government money in 1991 to pay for a lavish party for her personal secretary.



Fernando Collor: deposition

## Breakthrough for pooled research effort

# US carmakers win patent

By Kevin Done,  
Motor Industry Correspondent

GENERAL Motors, Ford and Chrysler, the three US carmakers, have been awarded their first joint patent in a breakthrough for the industry's pooled research and development effort launched in 1988.

The three companies have embarked on several joint R&D programmes, which only a few years ago would have been illegal under antitrust laws, in an attempt to gain a competitive edge over Japanese rivals. The patent has been awarded for a new process for produc-

ing vehicle components from liquid-moulded composites, which could replace the use of steel in the interior body structure of some vehicles.

Mr Don Walkowicz, executive director of the US Council for Automotive Research (Uscar), said the patent was a milestone for the industry's R&D effort. "It clearly demonstrates that domestic auto manufacturers can work together effectively to develop basic technology that will lead to better, more efficient products and enhance the competitiveness of the US industry." Uskar was formed last year to co-ordinate the carmakers' co-operative R&D programmes. The council now has 10 separate R&D consortia covering areas such as vehicle composites, advanced battery research, occupant safety, low emissions technologies, vehicle recycling, and computer-aided design and manufacturing.

The patent awarded yesterday was granted to Uskar's automotive composites consortium. Mr John Fillion, chairman of the consortium and manager of organic material engineering at Chrysler, said the patented process would help reduce the overall weight of composite components and could improve fuel economy.

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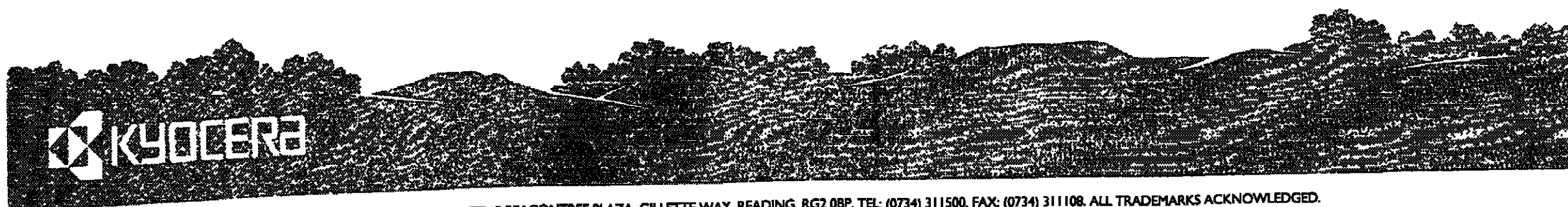
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## NEWS: WORLD TRADE

## Russian space plans struggle to take off

By Daniel Green

THE RUSSIAN space industry has hit difficulties in its western sales drive less than two weeks ahead of the official signing of its first commercial contract, worth \$36m (£23.8m).

Three obstacles to further contracts emerged yesterday. Inmarsat, the London-based telecommunications satellite operator which is the Russians' first western customer, said the export licence for the US-built satellite scheduled to be launched on board a Proton rocket from Kazakhstan in 1995 could be a one-off.

The new administration in Washington appears keen to protect the struggling US space launch business against cut-price competition. At last week's Clinton-Yeltsin summit in Canada, the talk was of co-operation at a scientific, rather than commercial, level.

At the same time Russia has not yet established whether it will be able to make commercial use of the former Soviet launch base at Baikonur in Kazakhstan.

Mr Dmitri Poluhin, director general of DB Salyut, which designs the Proton, the commercial launch vehicle, said yesterday that Russian President Boris Yeltsin would talk next month with Mr Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of Kazakhstan, over the base.

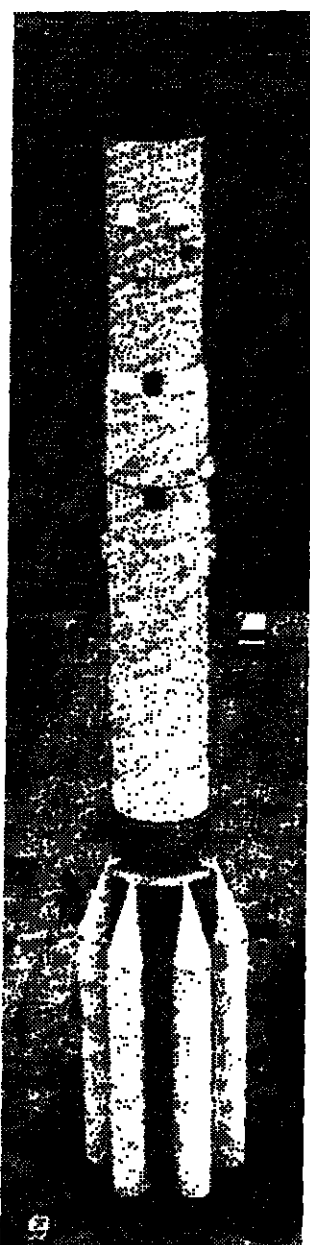
Finally there have been differences between DB Salyut and Khrunichev, which builds the Proton, over their dealings with the west.

Mr Poluhin said DB Salyut was the senior partner and would be signing the contract with Inmarsat. But he conceded that Khrunichev had bypassed DB Salyut and dealt directly with Motorola of the US over three Proton launches for a planned global mobile telecommunications network.

Mr Poluhin said he expected Motorola to deal with DB Salyut but had no sign yet of an approach.

The confusion was underlined by Mr Olof Lundberg, Inmarsat's director general. He said the precise costs of the Russian launch had not yet been established, and would probably be only slightly cheaper than the \$62m charged by the market leader, Ariane-space.

The Russian space industry dwarfs that of the west. Its potential to charge low prices for reliable launches has raised hopes that it could be a significant hard currency earner. But this has alarmed western rivals, especially in the US where recent launch failures have triggered a rise in space insurance premiums. Insurance already costs satellite owners more than \$300m a year.



The Proton rocket on its launch pad in Kazakhstan

## Moscow 'needs own Marshall plan'

ECONOMIC aid for Russia must address the country's underlying problems of monetary instability and structural change, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe says in its annual economic survey\* published today.

The ECE calls on the G7 nations, whose finance and foreign ministers will discuss aid to Russia as the main agenda item at their meeting in Tokyo today, to commit themselves to a long-term reform programme on the scale of the post-war Marshall plan that channelled billions of dollars of US aid into the economic reconstruction of western Europe.

"One of the worst outcomes would be... a list of short-term measures, hastily put together with a maximum of publicity," the ECE says, warning against another "false start" on the road to Russian reform.

The ECE, which groups almost all the countries of western and eastern Europe, the US and Canada, also urges western governments not to neglect other eastern European countries in their concern for Russia. A broader, regional perspective of the transition to market-based economies is needed, the report says.

The UN body has consistently argued that western aid for eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has failed to grasp the long-term dimensions of economic reform, which requires transformation not simply of economic and institutional infrastructures but people's understanding of

The ECE, a UN body, has put the stress on long-term aid, reports Frances Williams

and ability to operate in a market economy.

Western assistance has been inadequate, badly co-ordinated and poorly targeted, the report says. Too little attention has been paid to constructing coherent long-term transition plans and building a public consensus behind them, including provision of an effective welfare safety net.

Bilateral and multilateral financing for eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union may have amounted to about

\$40bn last year, the ECE estimates. But only a small proportion of this money was grant aid or concessional finance and little was directly focused on reform activities. About half was accounted for by debt rescheduling and other forms of "special financing".

The total sum compares with net German government transfers of \$96bn to its new eastern states in 1992, the report notes.

Foreign direct investment too has proved disappointing. Net inflows rose from about

\$600m in 1990 to just under \$3bn last year, but this compares with the \$26bn or so flowing to developing countries and worldwide flows of some \$200bn. In addition, 90 per cent is concentrated in Hungary and the Czech Republic.

"When debt servicing and other income payments are set in the balance against capital inflows, there was a net outflow of resources from most of the east European countries in 1992," the report says.

It also warns that protectionist pressures in Europe, such as recent EC restrictions on steel imports, threaten to snuff out glimmers of economic recovery in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, which have been largely based on growth of exports to the west.

Reviewing economic developments last year in eastern Europe (excluding the former Soviet Union), the ECE says output fell for the fourth year in succession, by 10 per cent, bringing the cumulative drop in GDP to more than 30 per cent. However, there were signs that the downturn was beginning to bottom out and in a few countries there were signs of recovery.

In Poland, GDP rose slightly last year, and a further increase is expected in 1993. Hungary, too, may see some rise in output this year. But the ECE fears the rupture in trade relations between the

new Czech and Slovak republics could stifle Czech growth prospects in 1993 and worsen the predicted drop in Slovak output. Elsewhere in eastern Europe, output is predicted to go on falling this year but by less than in 1992.

In Russia, the Baltic states and other former Soviet republics "the slump in output deepened through 1992". The ECE is making no prognosis for 1993. Russian net material product (which excludes services) fell by 19 per cent last year. In the Baltic states, output fell by 28 to 44 per cent.

Meanwhile, recorded unemployment in the transition economies rose rapidly in 1992, the Czech Republic being a notable exception, and the ECE expects another sharp increase this year as privatisation and bankruptcy laws bring redundancies in their wake.

The report notes that private sector activity is growing strongly in eastern Europe, especially in agriculture, construction, trade and other services, but not by enough to cushion job losses in largely state-run industry.

Inflation fell last year in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and the Baltic states but accelerated elsewhere. In Russia, the proportion of people officially classified as living below minimum subsistence levels more than doubled to 29 per cent over the year, as real incomes slumped. \*Economic Survey of Europe in 1992-1993, United Nations, New York. UN Sales Number E.93.II. ISBN 92-1-116555-5

### INTERNATIONAL AID COMMITMENTS To the countries of eastern Europe and the former USSR states\* (Ecu m)

Donors/creditors	Total
Community total	73,459
EC member states: of which	61,890
France	3,771
Germany	46,713
Italy	5,725
EC institutions: of which	11,579
EC	6,008
EB	3,370
Other G24 countries: of which	20,560
Canada	3,102
Japan	4,509
United States	1,252
G24: total above	89,913
Total bilateral	104,457
Total multilateral	14,327
Grand total	118,785

\* New eastern Europe commitments are cumulative from beginning of Q1 1990 to end of Q3 1992 for the ex-USSR from Q1 1990 to November 1992. Source: ECE

## Nafta tremors shake Canadians

By Bernard Simon in Toronto

A LABOUR dispute at an Ontario factory owned by Nestlé, the Swiss food and beverage group, has underlined the pressures on Canadian manufacturers and their workers to adjust to a more competitive trading environment in north America.

Nestlé locked out 220 union members at the factory near Ottawa after they refused to

agree to more flexible working hours. The factory's main products are instant coffee and Quik flavoured powders.

Lower tariffs under the 1989 US-Canada free trade agreement have helped boost the plant's exports to 70 per cent of output. However, Nestlé has excess instant-coffee capacity in its US and Canadian plants and is seeking to rationalise production. Workers at its two US factories have accepted the

arrangements being resisted by the Canadians.

Nestlé also has a coffee plant in Mexico. Production is geared entirely to the domestic market for the time being, with exports discouraged by customs duties in the US and Canada. However, tariffs between all three countries will be phased out if the North American Free Trade Agreement comes into force as scheduled next January.

TWO-WAY trade between the European Community and its eastern neighbours must not falter because of recession in western Europe, Sir Leon Brittan, EC trade commissioner, said yesterday, writes Lionel Barber in Copenhagen.

He was speaking at a conference on economic development in central and eastern Europe organised by the Danish government.

But Bulgarian, Czech and Hungarian delegations from among the 30 countries present complained that EC promises of more liberal trade jarred

BULGARIA has banned imports of livestock and dairy products from the European Community, effective from yesterday, agriculture ministry officials said, Reuter reports from Sofia.

The ban was imposed because of cases of foot-and-mouth disease in some EC countries, according to a ministry spokesman

with the EC's one-month ban on imports of live animals, meat, milk and dairy products, from across eastern Europe.

Mr Geza Jeszenszky, Hungarian foreign minister, said the embargo was "entirely unwarranted" and "it smacks of a most regrettable survival of the

Bulgaria, which is free of the disease, also banned the transit of live animals from the EC through the country.

The move followed an EC decision last week to ban imports of live animals, meat, milk and dairy products from eastern Europe until May 10 to prevent the spread of the disease.

eastern European partners as it is to the facts."

He himself was isolated within the Commission earlier this year when he appealed for a more generous approach to trade with eastern Europe, but he won some concessions from member states. Yesterday he

promised to use the EC's anti-dumping measures only against "genuine breaches" of multilateral trading standards.

According to a draft of the conference's final communiqué, the EC and Efta pledge to open up markets progressively, but only on a "mutually advantageous basis". It also urges the east European countries to reinforce trade relations between themselves and the former Soviet Union.

The EC runs a trade surplus of \$1.3bn (£960m) with Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and the Czech, and Slovak republics.

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## 'Agreement' reached on Group Lotus buy-out

By Kevin Done,  
Motor Industry Correspondent

THE management buy-out team seeking to take over Group Lotus, the UK sports car maker and automotive engineering consultancy, has reached some "preliminary agreements" with General Motors.

GM, the world's largest vehicle maker, took over Group Lotus for £22.7m in 1986. Group Lotus has suffered heavy losses in recent years, however, and GM had to pump

in £18m to repair the battered Lotus balance sheet in 1991 including the provision of £11.5m in new equity.

The UK subsidiary suffered its greatest setback last year with the commercial failure of its new Lotus Elan sports car. It was forced to cease production of the Elan after less than two-and-a-half years, making it one of the shortest-lived new cars launched on the world market in recent years.

Lotus had hoped to sell 3,000 Elans a year but the car was widely regarded as too expensive

Komatsu, the Japanese earthmoving equipment manufacturer, has announced it is providing technical support and sponsorship for the Lotus Formula 1 motor racing team. Research and development work in suspension and automatic transmission systems

sive and never came close to targets.

As a result Lotus Cars, the carmaking division which now produces only the very low volume Esprit 'supercar', has

been making heavy losses for the past two years. It now employs only 200 people - one third of 1991 levels.

GM Europe said yesterday that "no definitive agreements" had yet been signed with the proposed buy-out team led by Mr Adrian Palmer.

Mr Palmer had been promoted, however, to acting managing director of Group Lotus, from his former position as head of the Lotus car division.

Mr Martin Long, managing director of the successful engineering consultancy division of Group Lotus, is moving to a new post at GM Europe's technical development centre at Opel, GM's German subsidiary.

GM is the biggest customer of the Lotus engineering divi-

sion. Group Lotus losses have grown rapidly in recent years from £2.1m in 1988 to £4.4m in 1989, £12.7m in 1990 and £14.7m in 1991 on a turnover in 1991 of only £37.5m (£74.8m in 1990).

The demise of the car operations has masked the success of the engineering consultancy and vehicle testing operations, which greatly increased their profits in 1991 to £5.96m, from £1.56m a year earlier, on a turnover of £44.3m (£29.6m), largely thanks to increased work in particular from North America.

### Britain in brief



### EBRD denies excessive spending

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) said expenditure on its headquarters was "value for money" in spite of revelations that it spent £55.5m on fitting out its new offices and £18m on its previous office, of which £40m had been provided by the British government.

"The bank needed a headquarters building that was suitable to its needs as an international public institution with 23 resident directorships representing 66 members," it said in a statement yesterday. The UK Treasury said the control of expenditure at the bank was "a matter for the bank itself and its board of directors".

Mr Gordon Brown, the opposition Labour party finance spokesman, is pressing Mr Norman Lamont, chancellor of the exchequer, for an explanation of why the London-based bank had spent so much on the new offices.

according to the Federation of Small Businesses. The plan could save £1bn and have a desirable impact on unemployment figures, it claimed in a letter to Social Security Under Secretary Ann Widdecombe.

### New gas-fired station planned

Scottish Power is to build a power station in north Yorkshire to be fuelled by what it says is Britain's largest on-shore sour gas field.

The 40 to 50 megawatt power station will generate enough power to provide electricity for a town of about 15,000 people. Although small by comparison with other electricity plants, the planned station will underline the growing use of gas in power generation and the problems that causes for coal. The station is being built in the Vale of Pickering.

### Private finance for NHS

The government is examining ways of expanding the role of private financing in the National Health Service as a means of improving the service provided to NHS patients.

Mrs Virginia Bottomley, the health secretary, said yesterday she would "welcome" private-sector involvement in NHS projects - as long as the NHS benefited. "We should not have a kind of apartheid between public and private sector," she said. "Where private-sector skills, resources and capital can help us to go forward, then I welcome it."

### Escapes prompt prison meeting

Managers of Group 4 Court Services will meet Prison Service officials tomorrow to discuss the problems which arose during the first week of Britain's only private prison-escort service.

Four prisoners escaped or were wrongly released last week, when Group 4 took over the contract for escorting prisoners between prisons and courts in the east Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside.

### Retirement age of 63 urged

Retirement ages for men and women should be equalised at 63, rather than the government's preference of 65,

### Fresh crisis at London Zoo

London Zoo has been hit by a fresh crisis after the breakdown of talks with a millionaire leisure entrepreneur over a £35m development plan.

Mr David Laing, a member of the Laing construction family, had put together a consortium to build a walk-through aquarium and wildlife film theatre at the Regent's Park site. But a brief joint statement from Mr Laing's New Zoo Developments company and the Zoological Society said negotiations had broken down after both sides agreed their plans were "not compatible".

## Maastricht bill threatened with further delays

By David Owen

FRESH complications have emerged in Britain's tortuous bid to ratify the Maastricht treaty with opposition politicians threatening to delay government moves to push through legislation on closer European union.

With the House of Commons resuming detailed consideration of the Maastricht bill tomorrow, the opposition Labour party said it was still confident of forcing a vote on its potentially crucial amendment removing Britain's opt-out from the treaty's protocol on the social chapter.

Mr Jack Cunningham, Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, said there was a powerful case for a vote on the amendment "at this stage".

If Mr Michael Morris, the MP who chairs the detailed discussion, sticks to his decision not to allow a vote on the amendment during the committee stage - when MPs scrutinise the bill - the argument for allowing one in the subsequent report stage could be strengthened, Labour believes.

Mr Cunningham has written to Mr Morris requesting a meeting today to discuss the matter. Mr Morris, who is also deputy speaker of the Commons, has received separate submissions from the centrist

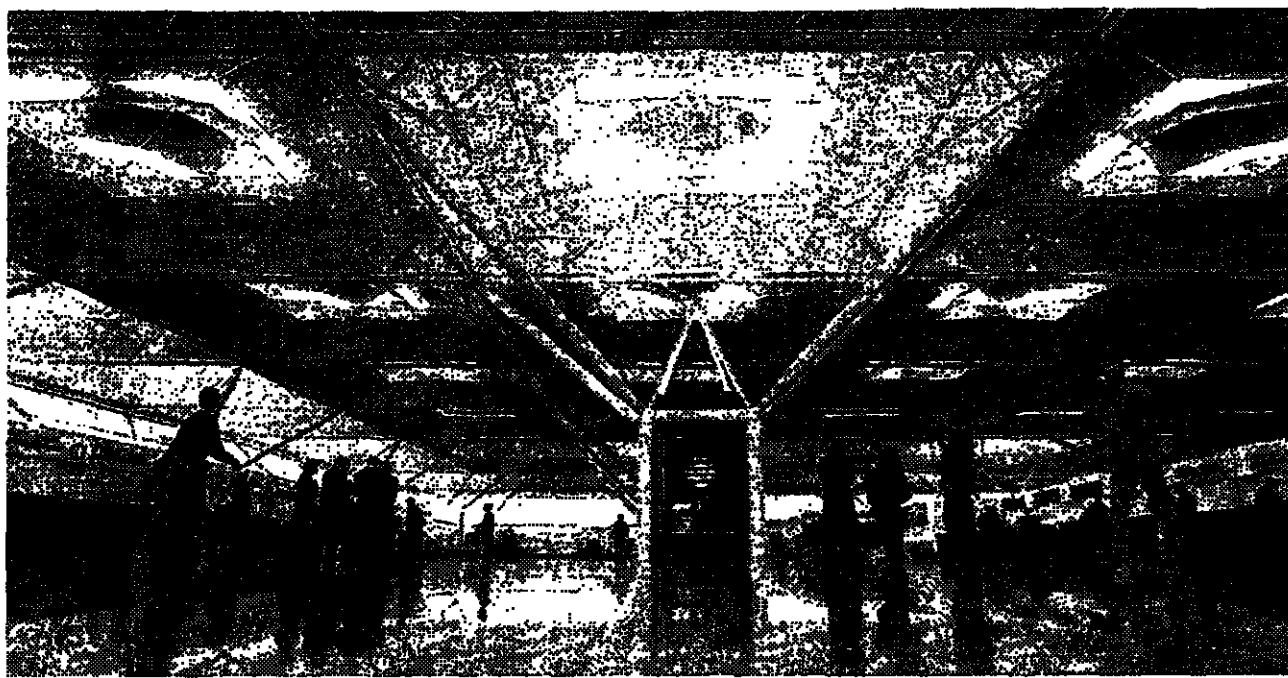
Liberal Democrats and Tory Euro-sceptics.

With the committee stage nearing its conclusion, some are predicting a series of government defeats tomorrow on non-wrecking Labour amendments to increase the accountability to parliament of EC institutions. The likelihood of this receded significantly last month, however, after the Liberal Democrats decided not to support the amendments.

Some Tory Euro-sceptics, meanwhile, appear to be lending support to a separate Labour clause to prevent powers being transferred under the bill until MPs had decided whether the social chapter should apply to the UK.

With the Liberal Democrats set to back the new clause, the support of the 20-25 hard-core rebels would all but assure the government of an embarrassing defeat. But the clause would only force the government to choose between ratifying the treaty and accepting the social chapter if Tory rebels voted for the chapter in the subsequent debate.

One Euro-sceptic yesterday predicted more than 20 rebels were likely to support the clause. In a separate move, seven Labour Euro-sceptics have tabled five new non-wrecking amendments in a fresh bid to delay ratification.



Although traffic from most BAA airports has increased, take-offs at London Stansted (above) declined 8.3 per cent last month

## Sharp increase in domestic air travel

By Daniel Green

DOMESTIC air travel showed its sharpest rise for more than a year during March, indicating greater confidence among UK businesses which buy most tickets for internal flights.

The latest traffic figures from BAA, which operates London's airports and three in Scotland, show a 5.5 per cent year-on-year increase in domestic passenger traffic.

The last time such a rise was recorded, in February 1992, it was blamed on a bounce back from the depressed figures of

two years ago in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

Without the Gulf war effect, March showed the biggest rise since August 1990.

However, Stansted - London's loss-making third airport - continued to struggle to establish itself as an alternative to Heathrow and Gatwick. While passenger traffic grew by 5.7 per cent, the number of take-offs fell 8.3 per cent.

Last month, the airport lost its only long haul route as American Airlines, the world's biggest carrier, pulled out of its Chicago service less than a

year after starting it.

The fastest growing of BAA's airports is Aberdeen, dominated by the oil industry. The number of passengers there rose 12.4 per cent to 195,000.

Traffic from BAA airports to the rest of Europe increased more quickly than domestic traffic, rising 9.8 per cent over March 1992. BAA's airports together handled 8.1m passengers in March, a rise of 6.2 per cent on last year.

Heathrow airport showed the biggest gain in the south with a rise of 8.3 per cent to 3.8m passenger during the month.

The number of aircraft taking off rose by 2.1 per cent. This suggests each departure more heavily loaded, a measure linked to airline profits.

The recovery in traffic echoes mild optimism in some quarters of the airlines industry. Many airlines operating across the North Atlantic, for example, have increased capacity by more than 10 per cent for the summer season.

But British Airways damped hopes domestic traffic was recovering sharply. It said domestic travel business was "still broadly depressed".

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## MANAGEMENT

It has taken General Motors less than a month to introduce "non-compete" clauses for key executives in the wake of the dramatic departure of J. Ignacio Lopez de Arriortua, its worldwide purchasing chief, to Volkswagen. The one-page agreements, which would normally preclude employees from working for a competitor for three years from the time of signing, were approved by the car-maker's board last week.

Lopez's spectacular exit, followed by other less senior GM employees, and his systematic drive on behalf of his new employer to sign up as many as 40 managers from German rival Opel - a GM subsidiary - will have sent a shudder down many corporate spines. VW's tactics may have run into opposition in the German courts - but defences against corporate poaching in other countries may not be sufficient to discourage an apparently growing practice.

The question in the US is whether GM's efforts to bolster executive loyalty by legal means will encourage other US corporations to follow suit. Labour lawyers are sceptical. The basic problem, they say, is that US courts are supportive of the free flow of labour and that making a "poaching" case stick is an uphill legal task.

A second problem has more to do with image. It is not easy to demand anti-trust enforcement and free trade practices on one hand and then corner personnel on the other. This is not to say that US companies do not try to tie executives in by legal as well as financial incentives. "Non-compete" clauses have been around for years. But such clauses cannot be overly onerous - in terms of the length of the non-compete period, or even geography. One lawyer cites an ongoing legal battle between two Wall Street investment banks. Action could only be brought, he says, because the executive in question moved from one New York office to another. Had he joined a Los Angeles or London office, the case would have been untenable.

That leads on to the thorny issue of what constitutes a "competing" situation. Some eyebrows were raised in the airline industry when Frank Lorenzo, the former boss of Continental Airlines, turned up as an adviser to MarkAir, a small regional carrier. As part of his deal on leaving Continental in 1989, Lorenzo had agreed not to work in the airline business for seven years. Lorenzo's company, Savoy Capital, maintained it was only "a consultant" to the newer carrier.

Trade secret suits, or the threat of them, have been a powerful weapon employed by established high-tech companies ever since Intel initiated such a move against a rival semi-

Large corporations are increasingly enticing employees away from rival companies, say FT writers

## Laying traps for the poacher



Come and join me: J. Ignacio Lopez de Arriortua has urged managers from rival Opel to move to Volkswagen

conductor company - Seag Technology - founded by 10 of its engineers in 1981. For a start-up company, such a legal challenge can be a serious distraction, eating up management time and limited financial resources. Rather than risk such suits from their former employees, would-be entrepreneurs usually try to reach "gentleman's agreements" not to compete directly and not to raid their former employer for staff.

In reality, according to US recruitment consultants, matters such as poaching tend to be resolved behind the scenes - whatever the formal legal safeguards. "There are situations which result in informal conversations, one CEO to a rival CEO - where one will say cease and desist before I do something dramatic," says one Manhattan recruitment professional. "Dramatic", she adds, non-attributedly, does not mean legal action; between Wall Street firms it is likely to involve cold-shouldering on syndication deals.

British employers, meanwhile,

use the promise of future rewards and clauses in employment contracts, to discourage poaching. But in the end neither method is fail-safe, as no company has a legal right to force anyone to work for them. Moreover even the heaviest gold handcuffs can be unlocked.

The most generous use of golden handcuffs was to buy the loyalty of television executives bidding for the ITV franchises in 1991. The estimated £60m the companies paid, mainly through share options, was a one-off. The companies reasoned that to have their top people leave during the bidding would be disastrous, as it would damage their claims to offer good programmes.

In addition to share options, companies are increasingly looking to other long-term incentives, with bonus payments staggered over several years, or shares in special accounts which are cancelled if the employee leaves the company.

Companies are increasingly resorting to "garden leave" clauses, which allow them to state

that an employee must spend a few months at home before taking up a new job. The idea is that any confidential information will be out of date by the time an employee joins a competitor. Other standard clauses include non-solicitation provisions which prevent departing employees from taking their colleagues and clients with them when they go. As none of these clauses have yet been tested in law, it is not clear how well they will stand up.

In Germany, however, extraordinary precedents are now being set. VW's Lopez was told earlier this month he could face six months behind bars if he continued trying "systematically to recruit" Opel managers.

According to a temporary injunction issued last week, after an appeal by David Herman, Opel's new chief executive, VW could also be fined up to DM500,000 (£208,000). VW started picking off a select group of new managers last year. The fruits of the early harvest,

brought in at the command of Ferdinand Piëch, VW's boss-elect at the time, include a new CEO at Audi, courtesy of Mercedes and a production director from Opel's showpiece low-cost works in Eisenach. Competitors say, Piëch was living up to his reputation as a determined manager with a keen eye for quality people. His recruitment drive was more wide-reaching than "normal", but then VW - which scored a DM1.25bn loss in the three months to April - had more than the normal range of difficulties.

According to Jörg Zauber of Eurosearch Consultants, a Düsseldorf headhunter with 20 years' experience, the Lopez offensive was "highly unusual". But not as unusual as Opel's bringing its complaints into the public arena and then to court. It was more common for chief executives to settle their differences personally in a "gentlemanly" manner, he says. However, Herman points out, calls to Piëch from Jack Smith, GM's chief executive had proved fruitless.

Opel turned instead to laws forbidding headhunting which go so far as to "endanger the existence" of a target company. The common practice of locking management board directors into five-year contracts is normally enough to protect the top layer. But as Zauber points out, the usual one-year notice period required of non-board management is hardly effective. It makes little sense to hold on to a person who wants to leave.

Herman is unfazed by the tribulations, implied in VW's actions, that Opel's buying and production people are the best in Germany. He is disappointed that VW, the industry leader, tried to solve its problems at Opel's expense.

The sort of friendly competition among industry leaders for which Herman evidently yearns created an environment in which poaching traditionally was not permitted in Japan. But changing economic circumstances have put increasing pressure on that country's rigid corporate hierarchies, making Japanese executives more willing to listen to headhunters. Indeed foreign securities companies have been able to lure senior managers from Japanese brokerages.

Larger Japanese companies, though, are still reluctant to court their competitors' employees. The hierarchy remains a formidable obstacle, as employees look forward to a slow, steady passage up the ladder. Loyalty is still lauded and the suggestion that a departing executive could take a roomful of his most trusted aides to a competitor prompts disbelief among Japanese executives.

Reporting by Christopher Parkes, Nikki Taik, Louise Kehoe, Lucy Kellaway and Robert Thomson.

## A question of misjudgment

Paul Abrahams on a public relations setback for Wellcome

Wellcome should by now be accustomed to public relations crises about its controversial HIV-treatment AZT. But this month the drugs group was badly caught on the hop when the UK Medical Research Council called a press conference about AZT's effectiveness. What happened thereafter is an example of how even apparently well-prepared companies can mishandle the media and the stock market.

"The whole business was a great pity from beginning to end," admits John Robb, chief executive.

Preliminary details of a Franco-British trial suggesting AZT did not slow-down the onset of Aids were presented by the MRC on Thursday, April 1.

The conclusion of the trial, if correct, had serious consequences for sales of the group's second best-selling product. Since the MRC press conference, Wellcome's shares have fallen 8 per cent.

Wellcome admits it was not ready for the MRC to publish the results. "We knew something was going to happen that week in terms of findings, but I expected a position to be agreed between the MRC and Wellcome," says Robb.

"And I didn't expect a press release to be sent out without our agreement."

Robb, together with two US executive directors and Martin Sherwood, head of public relations, were in the US presenting the company's recent results to staff and institutions.

"I took the view that our representatives were part of the trial monitoring committee and that it would be wrong to back out of a visit to US employees and shareholders," explains Robb. Meanwhile, in London, two executive directors were on holiday, leaving the research and development director, Trevor Jones, virtually alone to cope with the media. He was supported by John Precious, the recently appointed finance director, and two press officers. Robb admits the headquarters was understaffed. Wellcome's external relations machinery was overwhelmed, in spite of extensive

contingency planning and media training.

During the rush for information, the public relations department not only lacked data to counter the MRC's briefing, but actually gave out inaccurate information exaggerating the trial's potential damage to AZT's sales.

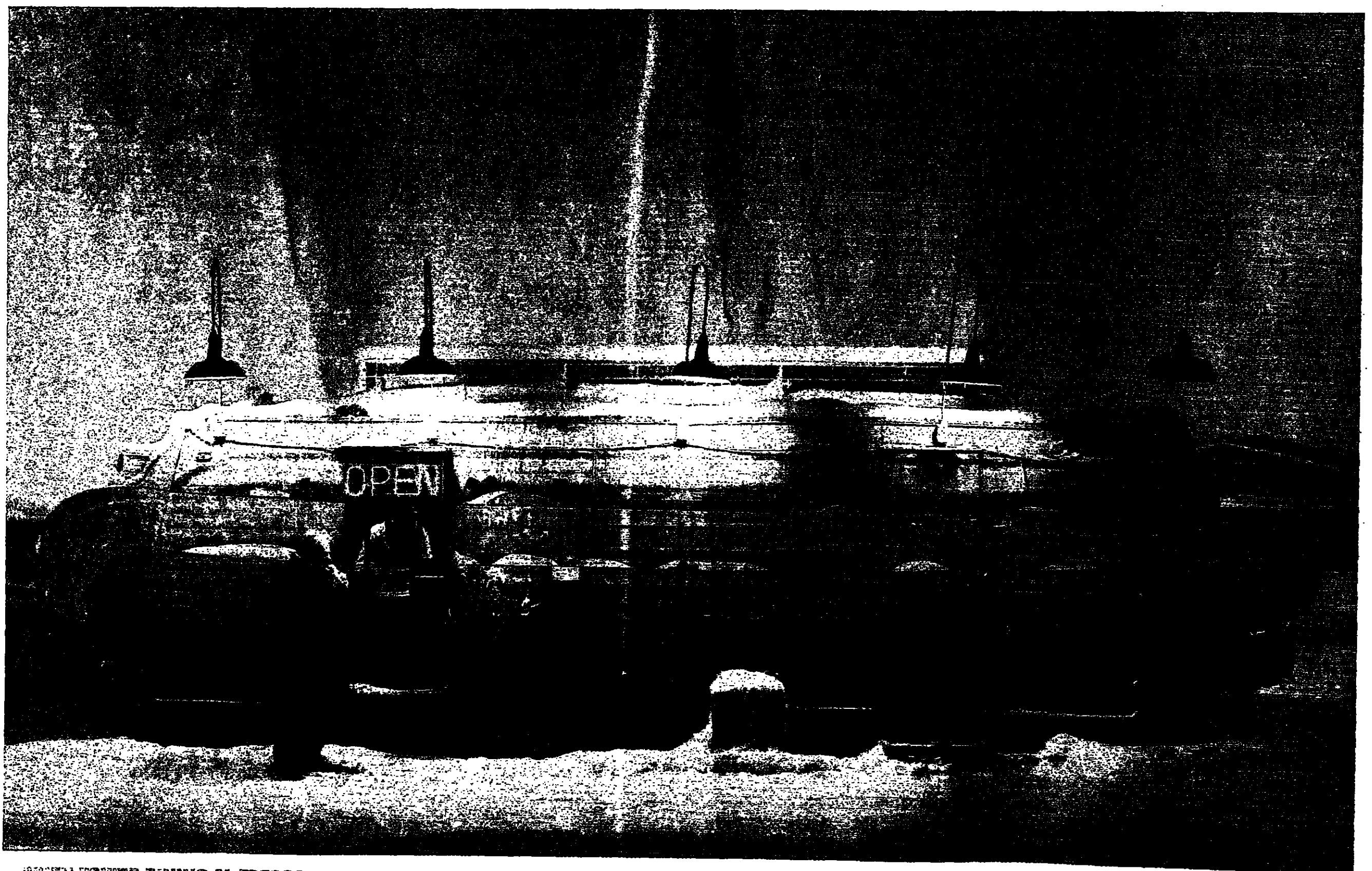
Press officers said 38 per cent of patients using AZT in the US were asymptomatic. They concluded that in a disaster scenario the company could therefore lose 38 per cent of its worldwide AZT sales, worth £131m for the first six months to February this year. In fact, the worldwide percentage of AZT patients who are asymptomatic is between 10 per cent and 15 per cent.

"An internal investigation has been set up to investigate how the 38 per cent figure was given out, and how expressions such as 'disaster scenario' were used," says Robb. The next morning, AZT's apparently disappointing performance was front-page news. The shares fell 51p to 682p.

"I was dismayed - but not by the share price," says Robb. "We are responsible to the doctors who prescribe the products, our employees and the patients. For them, the news was devastating."

Robb and his team returned from New York the following Saturday. They were convinced the MRC's conclusions were too strongly stated, given contradictory results from other studies and the preliminary nature of the trial's data. They thought the results, once properly analysed, would show the drug was effective.

On Monday last week, Wellcome counter-attacked, calling a combined conference for Wednesday for the press and analysts, and a later meeting for Aids activists. The presentations were not a success. The company misjudged its audience. A technical presentation left attendees, analysts and journalists, confused. Afterwards, MRC scientists attacked Wellcome's position, claiming the company had manipulated the data. The group's shares fell a further 23p. "We've learned a lot in the last few years, but we still have some way to go," says Robb.



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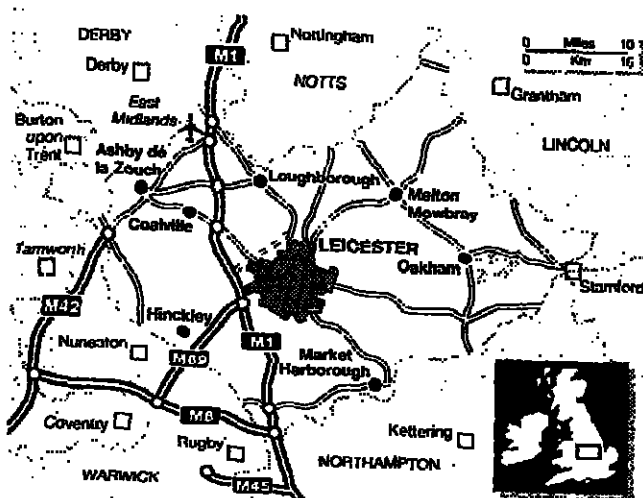


# LEICESTERSHIRE

Wednesday April 14 1993

Leicester's Asian community has contributed much to the city's economy: Page 3

The distribution and warehousing sector has grown fast: Page 2



The distribution industry and a dynamic Asian business sector have helped to cushion the county from decline in textiles, shoes and engineering. Business parks able to attract high technology are now being promoted. Paul Cheeseright reports

## County of contrasts

LEICESTERSHIRE is a county of contrasts. It has the external sheen of prosperity but the internal fear of poverty. It is like the business in a mature market which serves the future sliding away as newer products seduce regular customers.

On one hand, there is the quintessential shire county, with its picture postcard villages and dreamy countryside, the old England which never dies, with three district council areas said to be among the 20 most affluent in the UK, and whose come-hither literature asserts the status of "one of the UK's most enterprising and consistently successful locations."

On the other, there is the county with the full range of urban problems, which has joined the rush to London and Brussels pleading access to subsidies. "Leicestershire's economy is in decline and showing weakness from heavy dependence on traditional and declining manufacturing industries."

Certainly recession sapped confidence in established business. Although county unemployment at 8.5 per cent has been lower than both the East Midlands and the national

level, the average disguised pockets of high male unemployment in the inner urban wards of Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley, Melton Mowbray and Market Harborough.

Unemployment rose sharply around the traditional poles of the county economy - textiles, footwear and engineering. By the end of the decade, a further 25,000 manufacturing jobs are expected to disappear - in perspective, more than the total for all mechanical engineering employment calculated in the 1989 employment census.

For all that, economic pain has been less acute in Leicestershire than in, say, the industrial areas of the West Midlands. "Over the last few years it was not so much desperate recession as gentle decline," said Mr Richard Bruciani, chairman of Pal International, the hygiene and protective clothing manufacturer in Oadby and chairman of the smaller firms council of the Confederation of British Industry. "We've got a little dowdy."

Now evidence is accumulating that recession is ending. Higher levels of orders across most sectors in the county economy has brought a return of confidence. "People have

stopped scowling and started smiling," says Mr John Wareing, managing director of Jones & Shipman, the Leicester machine tools group.

Of course, an upturn in orders will bring relief. But sustained growth in the national economy, at a rate faster than most observers believe possible, will be necessary if Leicestershire is to approach an answer to the fundamental question it has been posed: how can enough jobs be provided for a labour force which is not only increasing but which will be weighted towards the over-35 age group?

There is a secular decline in the number of engineering jobs. The footwear industry has been successful in establishing niche markets for high quality products, but unsuccessful in protecting its domestic base for mass products. The textile industry has changed its shape into a congeries of smaller companies, able to react quickly to changing market conditions but always prey to imports. The deep coal mining industry has ceased to

exist; surface mining is both limited in scale and, not unnaturally, subject to environmental constraints.

There is then little prospect that the fundamental question can be answered through the traditional industrial base. As the county council complained to the European Commission: "Earnings for both men and women are well below the national average and the gap is getting larger. Investment in the county's manufacturing sector is well below the growth in manufacturing investment generally."

Nor can the county expect any immediate fillip from relocation of government departments or agencies from London. The first phase has bypassed Leicester; if an East Midlands city has been favoured, it is Nottingham.

To be sure, in recent years both city and county have sought to argue their case more forcefully; there has been more enthusiasm than in most parts of the East Midlands for a regional development organisation and there is widespread

disappointment that the headquarters of this putative body will be in Nottingham. The most obvious immediate source of growth from inward investment is through the distribution industry. There is some pride that about £80m has already been invested along the M42/A42 corridor. It is not surprising that the industry should be attracted to Leicestershire; if any county can claim to be at the hub of the national motorway network Leicestershire can.

But there are problems in this popularity. Distribution parks take up large amounts of space but they offer employment in relatively small numbers. Planners argue that it is better to have business parks; not only are there more jobs there, but also, if high technology industry can be attracted, there is the hope of future economic growth.

Such an approach is essentially long term. New manufacturing and the provision of high value-added services do not appear in a day. But in taking this approach to the question of finding jobs for the growing labour force, the

county has a number of advantages.

Not the least is the trio of universities - Leicester, Loughborough and de Montfort (formerly Leicester Polytechnic). Arguably the academic-industrial nexus is stronger in the county than in most other parts of the UK. Mr Alan Green, chief executive of the Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce, cites the growth of the design industry: "More design studios here than in London," he claims. "You can thank the universities for it. Out of them sprang this indus-

try which gets ignored. They're designing everything from Channel Tunnel trains to footwear and textiles. They're significant players in engineering design."

There will be opportunities further to exploit the marriage of academic and industrial expertise at Loughborough, where British Gas is building its research and development centre in what should be the first phase of a new science park, and in Leicester where a new park close to both Leicester and de Montfort Universities is on the drawing board. At the same time there is scope for parks, with a bias towards the aerospace industry, at East Midlands International Airport.

A second advantage the county has is the presence, in Leicester especially, of an entrepreneurially vigorous Asian community whose tentacles are likely to spread out beyond the retail economy of the corner shop and the clothing industry. Indeed, its presence is already marked. Leicester officials contend that the Asian presence gave the local economy a resilience, during the recession, which otherwise it would not have had.

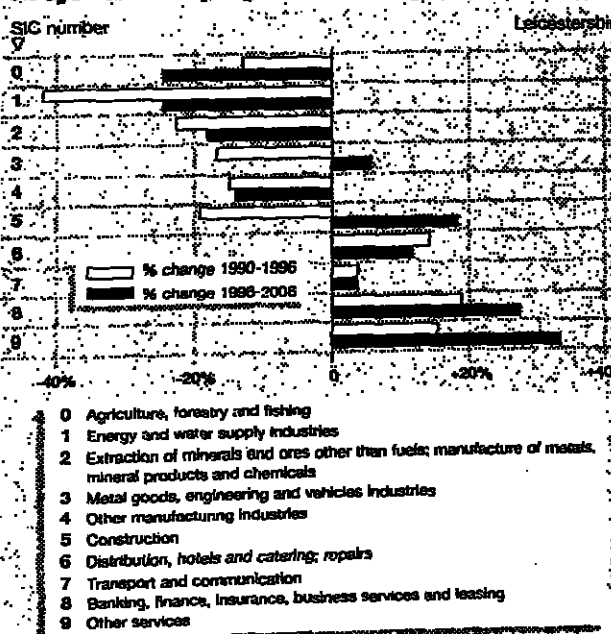
A third advantage is the corporate structure: the dependence of the economy on the proliferation of small and medium sized companies. Historically and in wider economies, they have provided both the employment growth and the energy for innovation - precisely the characteristics the county economy requires.

But the disadvantage for the county is lack of time. Longer term growth of higher technology industry, accompanied by energetic training programmes, may well be the answer to the economic future, but the social and economic problems of, notably, the inner city and old coal mining areas, pour in with pressing urgency. Hence the local importance attached to Leicester's City Challenge regeneration programme and to the County Council plans to the government and the European Community for funds to assist redevelopment of the north west of the county.

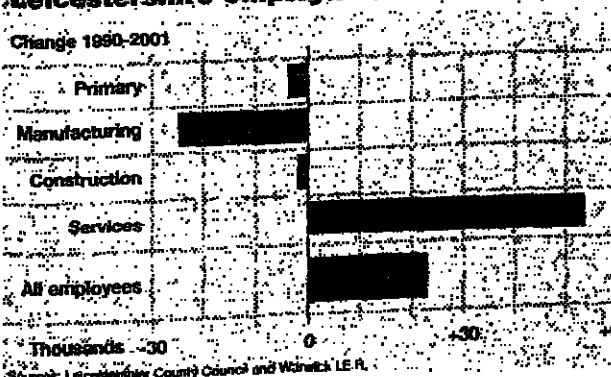
On one hand there are picture postcard villages and dreamy countryside, the old England which never dies; on the other there is the full range of urban problems



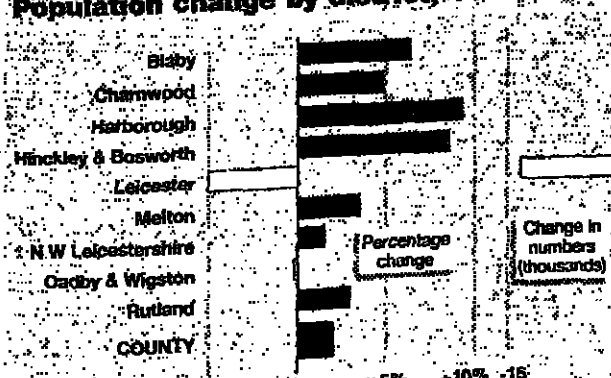
### Projected employment change by industry



### Leicestershire employment forecasts



### Population change by district, 1981-1991



### KEY FACTS

Area	985 sq miles
Population	890,000
County Authority	Leicestershire County Council County Hall, Glenfield Leicester LE3 8AR Telephone 0533 323232
Chief Executive	David Prince
Leicester City Council	New Walk Centre, Welford Place Leicester LE1 6XG Telephone 0533 549922
Chief executive	Imtiaz Farooqi
Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce	4 New Street Leicester LE1 5NT Telephone 0533 512300
Chief executive	A.H. Green
Leading Employers	British Gas East Midlands British Telecom East Midlands District Loughborough University Leicester City Council Leicestershire County Council Walkers Crisps Pedigree Petfoods Marconi Radar & Control Systems Rank Taylor Hobson Ltd.

Travel Times	Road	Rail
London	1hr 10min	1hr 10min
Birmingham	50min	50min
Manchester	1hr 50min	2hr
Glasgow	5hr 20min	6hr
Prime Rents (£ per sq. foot)	from	to
Retail	8.00	170.00
Commercial	8.00	13.00
Industrial	1.50	4.50
Average House Prices (£)		
2 bedroom terrace	41,887	
3 bedroom semi-detached	47,017	
4 bedroom detached	85,231	

Source: Information provided by National Startpoint Ltd (telephone 0785-43235) social, economic and demographic database information service providers

### Key Industries



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## LEICESTERSHIRE 2

Businesses in the county sense a turning point has been passed

## Export-led exit from recession

Mr Geoffrey Nicholls, chairman of the East Midlands CBI, emerged from the latest meeting of the regional council with a smile. It was, he said, the most positive meeting for two years. Leicestershire business is caught in this upturn of regional confidence.

It was reflected by Mr Alan Green, chief executive of the county's chamber of commerce, as he considered the raw data from the latest, so far unpublished, survey of local business trends. The returns show that more than 58 per cent of companies in the county are working at or above 80 per cent capacity.

The chamber's export documentation, provided for the Far East, Latin American and Middle East markets, has been running 15 per cent higher in the first quarter of this year compared with last. "The turning point came in January as the lower value of the pound manifested itself in overseas markets," says Mr Green.

As for two of the county's most significant industries, Mr Nicholls reports how busy the Leicestershire knitwear industry has been, while Mr Green's surveys suggest shoe companies had been enjoying fresh demand in the export markets.

Advance Tapes, the Leicester adhesive tapes company whose spread of customers across industry makes it a useful

barometer, has scented an upturn for a year. "The majority of increased orders, until the last three months, have been in overseas markets. Since mid-January we've started to show an upturn in the rate of UK orders," says Mr David Ayres, the chairman.

In the machine tool sector, a monitor of investment intentions, Mr John Waring, managing director of Jones & Shipman, notes that there has been more quotations activity in recent weeks, and that prices among the company's sub-contractors have started to harden. "There are signs of an upturn in UK demand, and in the US, but, with the exception of France, the rest of Europe is not encouraging," he warns.

The caveat about the European downturn notwithstanding, there is a clear impression in Leicestershire that the force of recession is on the wane.

Given that manufacturing accounts for 33.3 per cent of Leicestershire employment, compared with 27.4 per cent for the East Midlands and 22.5 per cent for the UK as a whole, the reasons for relief are obvious.

But the recession has done little to change the structural imbalances in the county's industrial base. The strengths and weaknesses remain intact. In spite of the recession's litany of job cuts, employment remains skewed towards the textiles, clothing and footwear sector. At the last employment census the proportion of such

In the local economy, the most obvious growth has been in distribution

jobs in Leicester was higher than in other traditional textile districts such as Nottingham, Manchester, Bolton and Bury.

Yet, in terms of gross output, the contribution to the county economy of the textiles, clothing and footwear sector is less than that of either the combined engineering industries, long a pillar of the industrial base, or the food and drink industry, where, although employment has fallen, there have been marked increases in output and productivity. The weakness for the future

is the relatively slow growth of high technology industries. "New technology industries are under-represented in the county, although the number of jobs in these industries is growing," according to the county council. In Leicestershire such industries accounted for 9.5 per cent of manufacturing jobs against a national average of 13 per cent.

The obvious growth has been in the distribution sector - a recognition of the fact that 88 per cent of the UK population is within four hours drive by heavy goods vehicle - in tourism, and in the services sector. By no stretch of the imagination, however, can Leicestershire be seen as a focal point for financial services.

The abiding characteristic of Leicestershire's corporate structure is the high number of small and medium-sized companies. To be sure, the county is the headquarters for British Gypsum, British Midland Airways, British Shoe Corporation, Pisons Pharmaceuticals and United Biscuits. And the county industries include well-known names such as

Bridgport, Brush, Caterpillar, R. Griegs (maker of Doc Martens), Evans Lifts, Triumph Motorcycles and Walkers Crisps. But few companies employ more than a few hundred and 75 per cent of companies employ fewer than 25.

Textiles, clothing and footwear remain under pressure from imports

"Much is to do with redundancies of departmental managers in larger companies. The only choice for them is to go into business on their own account," says Mr Green. Take spare parts for knitting machines: a machinery maker goes into liquidation, but because knitting machines can have an almost limitless life, there is a demand for spare parts, which can be filled by a small company spun out of the liquidating company.

This predominance of companies is, in one sense, a source

of strength. "When recovery comes, it will not be the larger companies which recruit, but the smaller companies," comments Mr Richard Brucciani, chairman of Pal International, the Gadsby hygiene and protective clothing manufacturer, and chairman of the CBI's smaller firms council.

But a weakness is that one of the strongest foundations of small company growth has been in the textiles, clothing and footwear sector, which remains under pressure from imports and in long term decline. And small companies are likely to remain dependent on the UK market and vulnerable to its erratic cycles.

It is precisely the need to succour the small company sector which has led Leicestershire enthusiastically to espouse the cause of the One Stop shop. Although there are a plethora of national and local initiatives in place to help small companies with exporting, technology transfer, business planning and the rest, the need to draw together the facilities for small companies has been obvious and pressing.



John Waring of Jones &amp; Shipman, the machine tools group

Application has been made to the department of trade and industry for its support in establishing one of its chain of One Stop shops in the county. But, even if that fails, the county council, Leicester City

Council, Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council and the Chamber of Commerce will go ahead on their own.

Paul Cheeseright

COUNTY planners are forced to tread a narrow line between the desire to foster economic growth and the needs of the countryside.

Their latest attempt is in the updating of the county structure plan which will establish the main land use patterns into the next century. Their favoured approach is to concentrate it in the urban areas and, "of the smaller amount of new development which occurs elsewhere, most should be in locations along the transport corridors."

These corridors include the railway lines, among them the new Ivanhoe Line, and the A6 road between Leicester and Loughborough. Apart from development related to junctions 23a and 24 of the M1, near East Midlands International Airport and where the M42/A42 and M1 join, planners dislike development along main roads unless related to existing urban areas.

Mr Richard Phelps, who conducted a public enquiry into the provisions of the structure plan last autumn, was broadly sympathetic to this approach. At any rate, development will not be allowed to rampage through the countryside.

But Leicestershire has particular problems with minerals. Not that it has none - it has. As the county council explains, they "can give rise to adverse environmental impact unless sites are carefully chosen, operated and monitored." The county is an important aggregate producing areas of the UK, home of British Coal's Ashfordby superpit.

As opencast operations are not necessarily friendly neighbours, there has been considerable local agitation about opencast coal and quarrying planning applications. The planners wanted to restrict coal operations to one important major coal site and have the coal transported by rail. And, because most of the rock quarries and most of the

reserves are in areas of "high scenic value", the planners are prepared to consider extensions to existing quarries but have come out against new greenfield sites.

Mr Phelps was less restrictive. He would have none of the council's proposed restrictions on the transport of coal, questioned how a site would be defined as "major" and recommended that "planning applications for opencast coal mining should be considered on their individual merits."

So the mineral arguments are likely to continue in the county. British Coal has identified only one area, in the north west of the county, as being of open coal interest. But in an effort to still the arguments, the local author-

ities, British Coal and private operators have been talking about how to devise a long term coal programme which will meet their interests and satisfy environmental considerations.

North West Leicestershire, indeed, is one of the county's priority areas for development. The underground coal mines closed during the 1980s. Around 50 per cent of employment is industrial, but jobs have been disappearing during the recession so that the proportion of long term unemployed is a third of the jobsless total. Economic growth in the 1980s by-passed the area.

In an area where the struggling coalmining villages provide a sharp contrast to the prosperous, manicured settle-

ments of the eastern part of the county, there is little desire to snuff out employment opportunities, whether they come from opencast mining or not. But it is because the area has become rundown that it has become part of one of the UK's boldest environmental initiatives. If the initiative started by the County-side Commission succeeds, it will create that virtuous circle of economic development and environmental care which the county council wants.

This is the creation of a new National Forest over 194 square miles in Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. It is an attempt both to rehabilitate the countryside by creating wooded land with a mix of uses, rather than pure forest, and to give new life to

an area turning its back on the past industry without seeing the future clearly.

"Clean up the environment and make it attractive and this will attract investment," said Mr Alan Tuppen, the County Council's economic development officer with - at the back of his mind - a vision of small woodlands business parks.

"The mining villages have been isolated but they could be brought back into the economic ambit by the A42 (recently brought up to near motorway standard and linking the M42 to the M1), the Ivanhoe Line and the National Forest," Mr Tuppen suggests.

But the National Forest is a long term venture which has barely started, although the first indications of willingness among farmers to turn land

over to trees are beginning to emerge and companies like East Midlands Electricity and, for that matter British Coal, are supportive.

The unemployment rate in Measham, a North West Leicestershire mining village, is running at over 20 per cent, the highest in the county outside inner Leicester wards. Economic decline set in when the local pit closed in 1985.

The problems of rural areas in the county, by contrast, have been emerging more gradually. Just as there is a decline in industrial employment, so there is in agricultural employment. Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) notes: "The national decline in agricultural employment will have the greatest impact on the more rural districts of Leicestershire - Harborough, Rutland and Melton."

In the same way as the pit closure in Measham set off a search for economic diversification, farmers have been travelling down the same

road, prompted by the erosion of once assured markets and by the reduction of subsidies. But the farmers appear to have gone further.

The Leicestershire TEC, in conjunction with neighbouring TECs and agricultural training organisations, found after a survey of farms in the county that that 44 per cent had diversified into - by order of frequency - contracting, retail outlets, farm building developments, leisure activities, holiday accommodation, transport and distribution and added value produce.

But the TEC warns: "It is uncertain as to whether diversification activities will either increase employment opportunities or fully employ existing labour in the long term." That will strike a chord in North West Leicestershire. But the difference between the mining villages and the rural areas is that the former must create a new environment to provide a future while the latter have to preserve and manipulate the existing environment.

Paul Cheeseright looks at county planning problems

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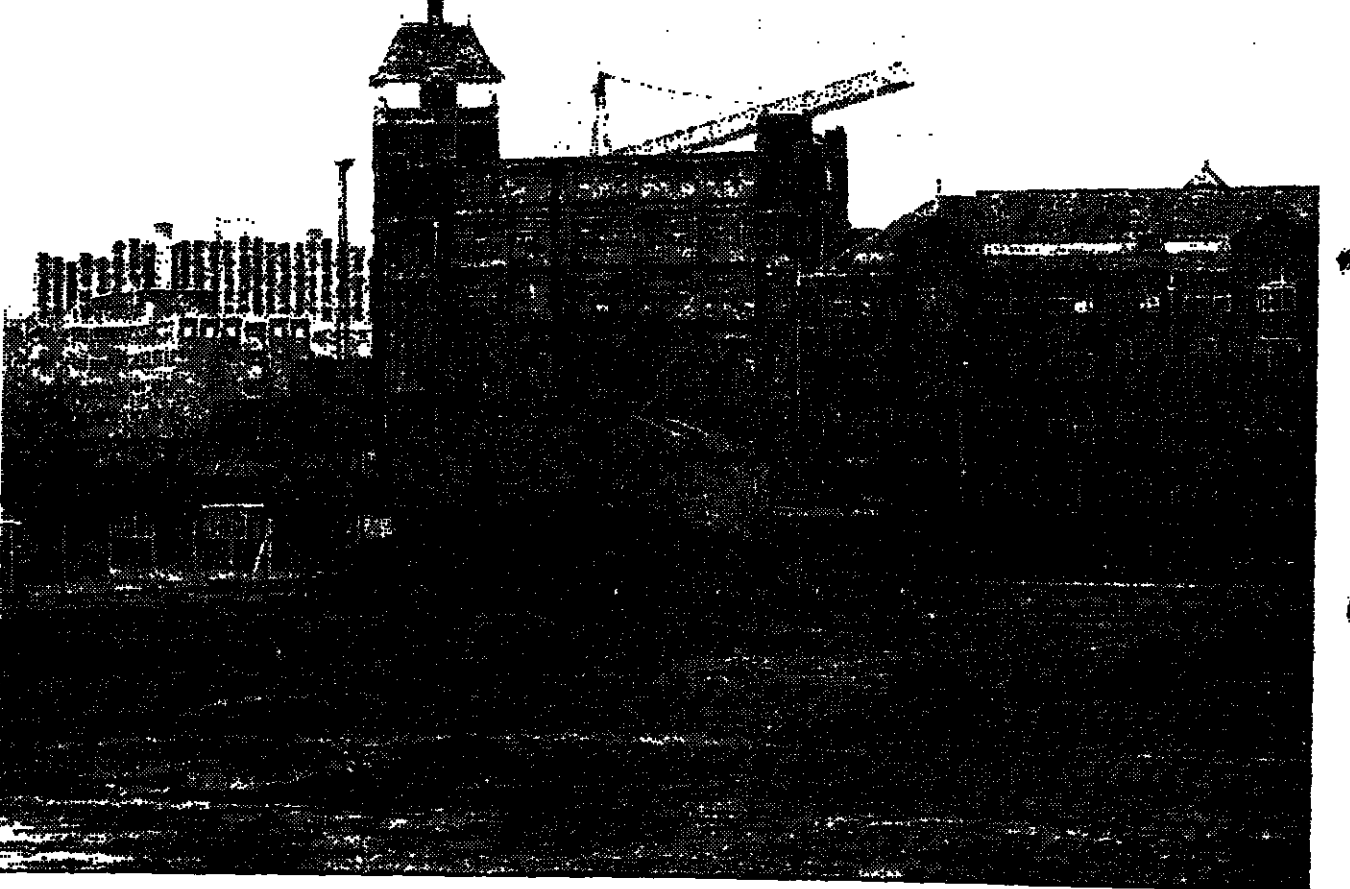
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Built With Confidence



The Bode Island area of Leicester, near the city centre, won a bid in the government's city challenge programme last November

Distribution and warehousing have developed fast

## Naturally at the centre

A look at a map of Britain shows why Leicestershire has become a centre for distribution and warehousing.

It is geographically at the centre of the country, and the M1 motorway runs through the county north/south.

Mr Alan Tuppen, economic development officer for Leicestershire county council, says: "We are like a lot of local authorities. We do not like the idea of vast tracts of our countryside being covered in warehousing sheds. Distribution does not provide many value added jobs, and takes up a lot of space. On the other hand, we must be realistic and recognise that our geographical position means we are a natural centre for distribution."

Consents for business parks with varying degrees of 88 or warehousing properties have been given without much fuss. Leicestershire has five main business parks within its boundaries.

There is Meridian 21, of which Wilson Bowden is the developer. There is Interlink (also under the aegis of Wilson Bowden). Bardon has Galliford as developer. There is Flagship 42 near Ashby-de-la-Zouche, which is being developed by London and Devonshire. And there is Magna Park, which is being developed by Gazeley, a subsidiary of Asda, in conjunction with the Church Commissioners.

These parks cover several hundred acres and have several million sq ft of property on them. They employ fewer than 5,000 people.

Meridian 21 is an industrial park with some manufacturers on its existing 110 acres. Magna Park has been built as a dedicated distribution centre. Close to Lutterworth, in a triangle bordered by the M1, M6 and M69, Magna Park was originally an RAF aerodrome.

Mr Andrew Griffiths, senior development surveyor of Gaze-

ley, which has been developing the centre, says Magna Park has been a great success. 75 per cent of the 4.2m sq ft developed so far has been let. (Clients typically take the properties on long leases; rents work out at about \$4.50 a sq ft.) Tenants include Nissan, Panasonic and Toyota. Phase two will provide a further 3.5m sq ft, with a £9m Lutterworth bypass linking the site to the M1 (the developer will be paying for this).

One reason for the success of Magna Park is obviously the location. Mr Griffiths estimates that over 90 per cent of destinations can be reached within a day's drive. East coast ports such as Felixstowe and Harwich are just over three hours away; Liverpool is a two hour drive. Heading south, it is three hours to Portsmouth.

But the other factor is the sheer size of the warehouses. Mr Griffiths says that the advance in information tech-

nology and the improvements in storage and handling techniques have revolutionised the distribution industry.

With computers, shops, supermarkets and factories can know their needs down to the last detail. "This means that if a warehouse is big enough it can take huge consignments from the ports and then distribute smaller loads by shuttle."

Improvement in handling techniques - bigger fork lift trucks, mechanical handling and the like - also means that distribution centres can store much more, because goods can be piled higher. Mr Griffiths says: "Better technology has advanced distribution. A typical Asda supermarket would receive 40 visits by lorries a day. Today, with computerised control and bigger storage facilities, the number of visits is down to five. This cuts down congestion and also costs."

Stewart Dalby



LEICESTERSHIRE 3

Stewart Dalby visits Leicester

# Green initiatives sow growth seeds

IN THE late 1980s, when nearly every British town and city north of London (and a good few south of it) were vigorously chasing new investment to replace declining industries, little was heard from Leicester. Leicester had its share of large company collapses arising from the recession of the early 1980s, particularly in textiles and light engineering. Now, apart from the utilities, no private sector company employs more than a few hundred. But job losses never rose as steeply as in nearby Coventry, or Corby. Throughout the decade unemployment did not exceed the national average and was usually below the regional average.

Today, unemployment in the travel-to-work area of Leicester is 9.2 per cent compared with a national average of 10.7 per cent. (As with most British cities there are pockets of higher unemployment in deprived inner-city areas.) Leicester is unusual in not having attracted either an important government office relocation or any significant

white-collar or service company investment in the last 10 years. Yet it has managed to contain average unemployment. Moreover, despite the shakeout in large textile companies, 36 per cent of the workforce is still employed in manufacturing. The national average is 23 per cent.

The reason is the dramatic growth in Asian businesses. Ethnic minorities now make up 28 per cent of the city's population; Indians from Uganda predominate. The Asian business community has permeated many areas of commercial life and is not confined to the corner store, so familiar in many cities. It is also involved in manufacturing, especially textiles.

Mr Imtiaz Farookhi, chief executive of Leicester City Council for the last 18 months, says: "I do not know why Leicester did not try to attract new outside investment in the past. It was before my time. Perhaps it believed there was no need. Certainly the Asian business sector saved the city from the worst ravages of

recession." Now, however, the city is trying to sell itself.

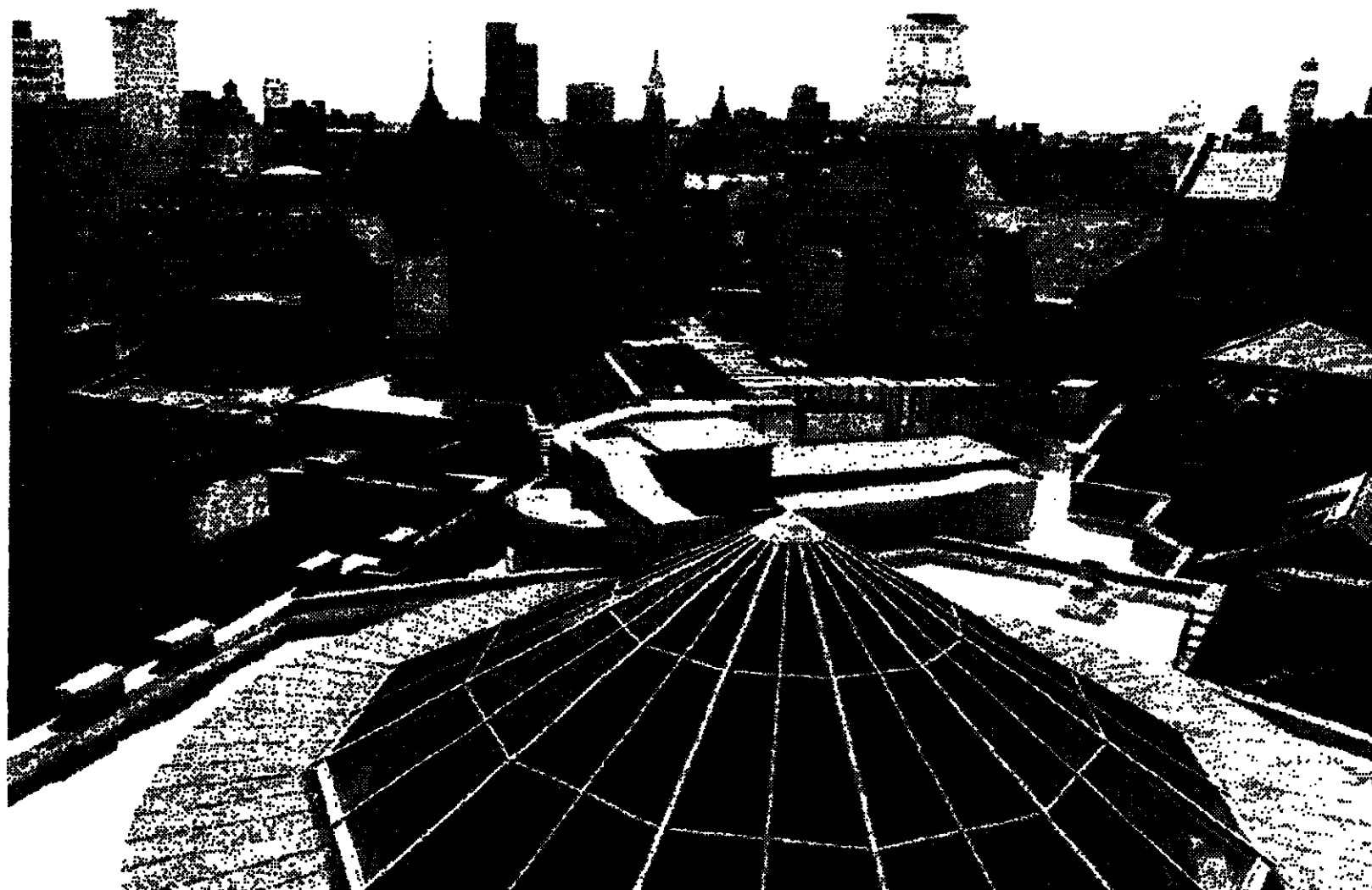
It is not that the Asian sector is beginning to falter, although many retailers are having a tougher time in the current recession than the last. It is because of a realisation that there may be a limit to how far Asian businesses can continue to trade up and add value. There is also an acceptance that something extra will be needed to carry the city into the late 1990s.

Ms Penny Baker, director of Leicester Promotions, says: "There is a feeling that Leicester has undersold and undervalued itself in the past. It seemed overshadowed by places like Nottingham. The Inland Revenue relocated to Nottingham and Nottingham almost captured English Heritage." Leicester Promotions, described as an "arm's length" company by Ms Baker, has representatives from private business, the public sector and local community organisations. It is part of the new effort to market the city.

Leicester's profile was raised further in 1990 by being designated the UK's first "environmental city".

At last year's United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Leicester Environment City was included among the world's 12 leading urban initiatives. This award has, in turn, brought the city an EC award of £2m for environmental improvement campaigns.

The Leicester environment campaign involves more than 80 initiatives, including the building of cycle tracks, paths to cut down on traffic pollution, waste re-cycling, and energy conservation.



Leicester is unusual in not having attracted either an important government office relocation or any significant white-collar or service company investment in the last 10 years

NET MIGRATION 1961-2006: Leicestershire		
Period	Net Migration	Source
1961-66	+15,260	Census
1966-1971	+10,600	Census
1971-1976	+13,645	Census and MYE
1976-1981	+9,154	Census and MYE
1981-1986	+2,800	Mid Year Estimates
1986-1991	+7,650	LCC Projection
1991-1996	+6,250	LCC Projection
1996-2001	+6,250	LCC Projection
2001-2006	+6,250	LCC Projection

Source: Leicestershire County Council

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN TEXTILE/CLOTHING EMPLOYMENT (1975-93)						
	1975/89	1975/89	1984/89	1989/91	1989/91	1989/91
	SI/CAS/45	Industrial	SI/CAS/45	Industrial	SI/CAS/45	Industrial
Leicester (4 Wards)	N/A	N/A	-24.0%	-24.0%	-2.0%	-13.7%
Leicester District	-19.4%	-28.2%	-12.5%	-15.4%	0.4%	-17.5%
Leicester TTWA	-9.6%	-14.8%	-13.9%	-8.9%	4.0%	-7.7%
County	-22.6%	-16.7%	-12.4%	-8.4%	6.0%	-13.7%
Loughborough/Shephard	N/A	N/A	-14.3%	-27.7%	16.8%	-16.7%
Hickley/Swell/E Shilton	N/A	N/A	-23.1%	-3.9%	23.8%	-20.0%
East Midlands	N/A	-19.6%	-12.0%	-2.8%	8.0%	-40.0%
Great Britain	41.3%	-28.6%	-8.4%	-5.2%	6.2%	-15.2%

tion, waste re-cycling, and energy conservation.

Mr Ian Roberts, director of Leicester Environment City, feels that a good environmental image is important if Leicester wants to develop as a post-industrial city and attract tourists and leisure industries.

He adds, however: "It is not just a question of post industrial activity. We run an advisory service. We run a constantly changing legislative background. It is important that companies know what is expected of them."

Leicester's search for new investment has been hampered by a lack of greenfield sites and by the shortage of modern B1 light industrial and office space. The boundaries of the city are tightly drawn.

Existing B1 space is estimated at about 1m sq ft, but it is old and divided into small units. A property of 50,000 sq ft would be deemed large.

Hopes are pinned on the "City Challenge" area to attract new investment and bring about inner city regeneration.

The area of 370 hectares (888 acres) which won a bid in the second round of the govern-

**The City Challenge award from the government is £37.5m over five years**

ment's city challenge programme last November is called Bede Island. It is on the River Soar and close to the city centre.

The government has awarded £37.5m over five years. It is hoped that this money will help to generate some £160m of private sector investment and create 3,000 new jobs.

The key commercial develop-

ments will be a science park and other office and and shopping units.

There are also plans to build a fashion museum. The reasoning here is that, unlike other former industrial cities, Leicester does not have the normal tourist draws like a beautiful cathedral. Nor has it developed attractions based on its industrial past such as the museum of photography in Bradford, the beer museum in Burton-on-Trent or the Albert Dock in Liverpool.

A fashion museum would emphasise Leicester's historical links with the textile industry and tie in with De Montfort University, the former polytechnic, which has more than 20,000 students and a campus close to the proposed site. It has a strong tradition of fashion studies as well as engineering and would be close to both the museum and the science park.

The city challenge scheme could be seen as another urban development corporation. Development of B1 property and shops could have led to tensions with the local population as occurred in the London Docklands or Bristol.

But Mr Keith Beaumont, the chief executive, who was once head of the Sheffield UDC, says the situation here is different "because the community is actively involved. This is not developer-led - and anyway, some 13,500 people live in the area."

More than a fifth of this population is aged 60 and over. About a quarter is made up of ethnic minorities. A high proportion of students live in the area. The unemployment rate is 13.6 per cent. Approximately two fifths of households receive some form of benefit. About eight hectares is derelict land, a quarter of the city's total.

Much discussion and planning has taken place to ensure that the social needs of this deprived area will be addressed. As well as developing business premises, there will be a lot of funds devoted to environmental improvements and to social conditions. Some 900 houses will be improved and several hundred new units built.

Mr Alistair Reid, the principal economic development officer at the city council, sees the city challenge project as the spearhead of the attempt to attract new investment to Leicester. Asked whether Leicester has missed the boat now that government departments are not relocating from London as much as in the 1980s, he says: "You could say that. But there will be other boats. Relocation out of the south-east will go on for years once the economy picks up."

Asian businessmen are looking to new markets

## Families are tightly knit

THE ASIAN community and its involvement in Leicester's economy has grown rapidly in the last 20 years.

Ethnic minorities now account for about 28 per cent of the city's population of 280,000. The dominant communities are Asian: Hindus who arrived from Uganda in the 1970s; Sikhs from the Punjab, and Moslems from Pakistan.

Mr Bullu Patel is the development officer for ethnic communities in the "City Challenge" area of Leicester. Formerly business development officer at the chamber of commerce, he thinks that it is nearly impossible to estimate the contribution made by Asian businesses to the city's economy. He says: "So many employees are relatives - and therefore often not officially registered as workers. Asian businesses can be coy about output. As near as I can estimate there are 4000 ethnic - mostly Asian - businesses in Leicester."

These include many small corner shops; grocers, super-markets, pharmacies, jewellers, clothes and dress shops. But significantly, Asians have also expanded into manufacturing, particularly textiles.

In a sense, Asian businesses in Leicester have anticipated a national trend. Large, monolithic, footwear and garment manufacturers with predominantly male, heavily unionised, well-paid workforces, began to shrink or even to disappear during the 1980s, under the pressure of cheap foreign competition. They were replaced by some Asian manufacturers employing females, who are paid less well.

One such is the Poshak group, which also trades as Water Rose. Poshak is run by Mr G.S. Bakshi, a Sikh, with his son Miti, who is 29, and Miti's cousin Ringu, 28. Other than a non-Asian accountant, there are no other directors or managers. There are 70 employees, many of them female.

There are two silk-screen machines and an embroidery unit. The three Bakshis work from seven o'clock in the morning to eight or nine o'clock at night.

Because most of the people sitting over the sewing machines are family members, there are flexible working arrangements over pay and conditions. Mr G.S. Bakshi declined to say what the wage rates were, but admitted that some workers were on piece rates. The company's success, however, depends only partly on controlling costs.

Mr Miti Bakshi says: "We came here from London in 1987. Everything is better value for money - wages, the buildings, raw materials."

But he adds: "We cannot compete on cost. You could import a T-shirt from Hong Kong for 70p. The yarn alone would cost us that. The cheapest we could produce a bottom-of-the-range T-shirt is 160p. Where we compete is by being close to the ground and being flexible. Let me give you an example. We know our customers are very well. They are wholesalers. If they import some garments which turn out not to be the right colour they often turn to us. We can supply them within three days."

Fast throughput is thus as important as cost. Mr Ringu Bakshi says the factory turns out 35,000 garments a week and that the factory is never without yarn. Asked whether the company has been affected by the recession, Mr Miti Bakshi says: "No, what recession?" This may be true for Poshak, but Mr Bullu Patel says the downturn in retailing has caused other textile manufacturers to have a more difficult time. "What some of them

have done is to load up lorries full of garments, drive to places like Germany and sell to East Europeans."

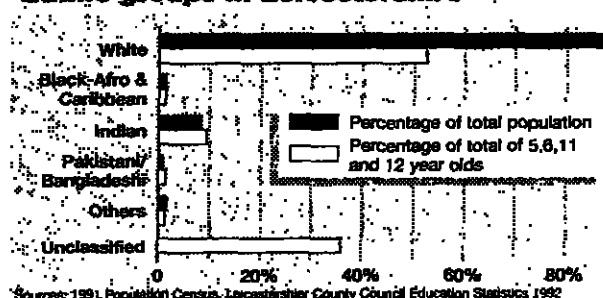
The need to find new markets has led to the formation of a group called Asians Tackling Business, run by four second-generation Asian professionals. One of the directors, Mr Jitendra Patel, a solicitor, says:

"What the recession has done is make many businesses realise they must become more sophisticated. Banks who never bothered companies before now want quarterly statements. What we aim to do is convince Asians that they are not running just Asian businesses but businesses like anybody else."



Leicester's ethnic minorities: 28 per cent of the population

### Ethnic groups in Leicestershire



businesses growing into large country-wide concerns. But they will start up new businesses and spread into areas such as corporate image-making, marketing, financial services, in which Asians are currently not involved."

Stewart Dalby

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## BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

More than a million barrels of crude oil have spilled out of Colombia's pipelines over the last six years, polluting wetlands, streams, forests and farmlands. The environment is one of the principal victims of the guerrilla war on foreign oil companies and the state petroleum company, Ecopetrol, has become expert at emergency clean-ups.

But it is not just clean-up technology that has blossomed in Colombia. Legislation, refining and management standards are also improving fast and some of the measures taken to safeguard oil installations from the guerrillas are turning out to be unexpectedly friendly to the environment.

Both of the main oil producing regions are well inland: most of the older fields and the main refining centre are strung out along the Magdalena valley, while newer discoveries (including Cusiana and Cupigagua, explored by BP) lie east of the Andean mountain ranges in the "Llanos" plains.

Guerrillas belonging to the left-wing national liberation army (ELN) and the communist-line revolutionary armed forces of Colombia (FARC) roam these areas, assaulting and dynamiting their targets, then disappearing into forest camps or local settlements virtually under their command. The rebel groups - which aim to force oil multinational companies out and impose a more nationalist oil policy - have financed their activities by kidnapping and extortion. The government is trying to cut off these sources of funds, at the same time sending in more troops.

Although the three trans-Andean pipelines are buried wherever possible, there are particularly vulnerable stretches across rugged gullies and swamps. In any case, a little digging has never been an obstacle to the guerrillas. In 1982, there were more than a hundred attacks on these three pipelines, costing \$8m (\$5.3m) in clean-ups and repairs. Oil exports virtually ceased in November and part of December, forfeiting over \$100m of income, while a million barrels of crude had to be imported from Ecuador at short notice. Repairs to the pipelines are made more difficult by guerrilla efforts to prevent access.

Ecopetrol and the oil research institute have developed a pipeline database which details petrol sites, key observation posts, hydrology, access roads, response times and available equipment such as floating booms, oil skimmers and suction pumps. If the pipeline is dynamited in a very steep section and oil spills into a fast-flowing river, little can be done.

"We have to act in places where the river flows down and widens out," said Jaime George, head of

Rebel attacks on oil pipelines have taken their toll on Colombia's forests and farmlands, writes Sarita Kendall

## Cleaning up the battle zones



A state oil company worker crosses spilled crude oil to tackle a fire caused by a bomb attack on a pipeline

Timothy Ross

Ecopetrol's environmental division. "We don't use dispersants in rivers because they mix oil into the water and this could go into a water supply system. In the case of wetlands, we are monitoring constantly. The leaves of any contaminated vegetation must be removed - this takes a lot of time but the tropical climate helps recovery."

Repeated guerrilla attacks have led companies to centralise their production facilities, which serve both security and environmental ends. Ecopetrol is cutting the number of collection centres in one area of the Magdalena from 76 to 6. BP will drill a number of deviated wells off the same sites at Cusiana. Each site has lookout posts with armed guards and helicopters fly unusually high between landings. Cupigagua 1, alongside a main road, is protected by sandbags.

The oil companies and the guerrillas are to some extent competing for the heart and minds of nearby communities. The government

recently decided to move settlers farther away from oilfields on the grounds that guerrillas have encouraged their sympathisers to occupy these areas and give them cover and support.

The companies provide jobs, build schools, health centres and roads, and feed royalties to the local authorities. Occidental, which operates the Cano Limon export field, runs a massive publicity campaign on television and in the newspapers stressing its environmental and community work.

"Last year, the consortium spent over \$8m on environmental protection at Cano Limon - about half on pipeline clean-ups and half on other projects - scientific studies, the sanitary landfill and so on," says Ed Metcalf of Occidental. The company has sponsored studies on mammals, fish and insects and planted over 400,000 trees - 20 times more than the figure required by the Natural Resources Institute.

BP, which is drilling deep wells in

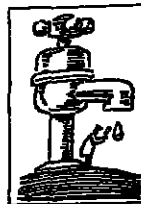
an area with highly-complex geology, has introduced "powerful and sophisticated equipment," says Phil Mead, the operations manager. All the water at Cupigagua 1 is recirculated in a series of three minimum-sized pits, and water - rather than oil-based mud - is being used for drilling. There have been problems with two sites - one where a landslide occurred and another where the local community complained that the well was located too close to a river.

Carlos Fonseca, an environmental expert at Bogota's Lasalle University, says: "The outlook is very positive now; both national and foreign companies are much more aware. But employees need extra training for the new standards and we must have more environmental audits." Although everyone agrees there is still room for improvement, Colombians have come to associate the image of oil-soaked birds with guerrilla actions rather than company operations.

## WORLDWIDE WATER

## Commerce and culture prompt a cleaner Japan

Tokyo wants purer supplies, writes Robert Thomson



When the Russian navy confessed last month to having routinely dumped nuclear waste materials in the Sea of Japan, government leaders in Tokyo reacted with uncharacteristic bluntness, describing the action as "unbelievable" and a "disgrace".

The tough response reflects the Japanese sensitivity to water purity, a sensitivity heightened by the country's past mishandling of its own water resources and by an ongoing debate over balancing the needs of industry with the rights of domestic users to clean water.

But it is typical of the Japanese response to the dilemma that the government did not only criticise Russia. Today, Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister, will offer technological assistance to Russia's nuclear industry at a meeting of finance and foreign ministers of the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations.

In a sense, the Russian navy had done in the 1980s what Japanese industry was guilty of during the rapid years of industrial growth in the 1950s and 1960s. Inspired by a desire to "build a strong Japan", the country consciously sacrificed the quality of its river and sea water for the cause of industrial growth.

The turning point in Japan came after the Minamata poisoning case, which began in 1957 and still dominates any debate on water quality. Chisso, a chemicals manufacturer, had pumped mercury refuse into the waters around the town of Minamata, on the southern island of Kyushu, contaminating fish and leading to the poisoning of the local population and the deformity of newborn children.

Chisso denied responsibility and continued to pump materials into the sea long after the first cases were discovered, but has since admitted its guilt. Meanwhile, negligence actions are still moving slowly and painfully through the Japanese courts in an attempt to prove that government controls

were too lax. Even without a clear court precedent, the images of Minamata were shocking enough for the government to take action. The Minamata case challenged Japan's self-image. Water and its purity are a prime inspiration for poets and painters, while the eating of fish, raw or cooked, is seen as part of the Japanese culture. The mass poisoning of a local community prompted many to conclude that the Japanese way of life, along with water, was in need of protection.

Tetsuya Ikeda, chief of the water supply division at the Ministry of Health and Welfare, says the accumulation of industrial

pollution from the high-growth era still affects the water supply. In spite of two decades of anti-pollution campaigning that has imposed increasingly tough standards on factories.

"The biggest problem for us now is to get rid of the foul smell and unpleasant taste of water," Ikeda says. The problem is particularly severe in the greater Tokyo area, home to 30m people and still a heavy industrial centre about 80 sources were polluted, and less than 10m people suffered with bad smell and taste. Last year 100 sources had a problem and about 20m people suffered.

Concern about water quality has stimulated demand for mineral waters, increasingly used by parents fearing for their children's health. Technically, Ikeda says, that there is no danger to health from Tokyo water, but youth magazines have gone as far as encouraging their readers to use

only mineral water when shampooing their hair. Domestic mineral water production rose from 101,000 kilolitres in 1988 to 300,000 last year, while mineral water imports rose from 16,500 to 45,500 over the same period. The Japan Mineral Water Association says "people are worried about their health", and want to be certain that their drinking water is pure.

Demand for pure water has led to a doubling of water purifier sales in each of the past three years. Toshiba, the electronics group, this month launched new coffee makers and kettles with built-in purifiers. Mitsubishi Electric has just begun selling high-powered engines for domestic wells, increasingly popular among families wanting to draw their own water.

There is also widespread concern about preserving natural water courses. The most controversial environmental issue in Japan over the past five years has been a plan to dam the Nagara River, in the Chubu region of central Japan. Local opponents to the project say the dam is unnecessary and will threaten wildlife, while the regional government argues that it will prevent flooding and make better use of water resources.

The Nagara dispute and a current political scandal, involving kickbacks to politicians for public works projects, have led to greater public debate over the management of water resources. Typically, the construction ministry will undertake large infrastructure projects, while the resources will be managed by local governments.

Electricity and railway networks are privately run in Japan and the government has sent a delegation to study the British experience in water privatisation. But a member of the delegation says the management efficiencies that may result from privatisation are not compelling enough to overcome bureaucratic opposition to such reforms.

encouraging their readers to use

## PEOPLE

## KPMG set to pick Sharman

Colin Sharman, head of consulting at accountants KPMG Peat Marwick, is set to become senior partner of the firm when Jim Butler retires at the end of the year.

A nomination committee to choose Butler's successor made Sharman its single recommendation for the appointment last month and is now taking further soundings before a final meeting of the firm's board of 26 senior partners on April 27. Its view is unlikely to change, although the decision must be ratified by a vote of the full partnership - 600 in all. The nomination committee itself comprises four members of the firm's board, and three others chosen by the partnership at large.

"At 64 I'm getting to be quite an old man by the standard of some of the partners," Butler says. He is likely to pursue other activities but has not yet made a decision on what these would be.



Sharman (above) has been credited with turning around the consulting division of the firm, and is currently responsible for implementing "20/20 vision", a wide-ranging programme to restructure the internal organisation of the firm and make it more focused on its clients' needs.

Butler's retirement as senior partner will follow shortly after his resignation as chairman of the international

KPMG network after nearly three years at the end of September.

He will be replaced by Hans Havermann (far right), senior partner of the firm's German practice and chairman of its European board. Jon Madonna, senior partner of the US practice, will become international deputy chairman, and Ross Walker, Canadian senior partner, international executive partner.

The appointment of Stephen Barrett (right) to the corporate finance division of KPMG Peat Marwick marks the first time a lawyer and merchant banker has become a partner in the accountancy firm. Barrett began his career as an assistant with solicitors Norton Rose and became a member of the Law Society, before switching to merchant banking. He worked for 10 years at Lloyds Merchant Bank before its closure, which was announced late last year.



He says he joined KPMG partly because of its range of professional expertise and industry knowledge. He also argues that corporate finance is polarising between the "big battalion merchant banks" and the professional service providers such as his new firm. It is those in the middle which will be squeezed, he argues.

"Gone are the days when a client simply wanted a transaction manager," he says. "They want an adviser to participate in their growth and be truly proactive." He says the transition from the racy culture of banks to the more sober corridors of accountancy is not proving too great, partly because of the nature of those already working in KPMG's unit.

■ Stephen Goodwin has been appointed md of TIPROOK RAIL; he replaces John Emms, who becomes director Asia & Australasia.

■ Michael Phillips, md of Thames Television International, has been appointed a director of THAMES TELEVISION.

■ Mike Rogers, chief executive, will become executive chairman of NESTOR-BNA on June 1; Alan Pilgrim, md of BNA, will become group md.

■ Michael Winstanley, formerly president of Albright & Wilson America, has been appointed finance director of ALBRIGHT & WILSON Ltd on the retirement of Hugh Podger.

## Fleming scoops up a Rockefeller

The Rockefellers may not be as rich as they once were, but the name still has a cachet in financial circles. Hence the appointment of David Rockefeller, head of the fourth generation of the family, as a non-executive director of Fleming Overseas Investment Trust, is quite a coup for London merchant bankers Robert Fleming.

Lord Mark Fitzalan Howard, the Fleming director in charge of the group's investment trust operations, says that his bank has been associated with the Rockefeller family for many years. The two parties used to have a joint venture which invested in unquoted

securities and Rockefeller Financial Services, which looks after the family's extensive business and philanthropic interests, has an office in Fleming's headquarters.

Despite his name, David Rockefeller, 51, is a relatively recent convert to big business. After studying economics at Cambridge University and law at Harvard, he worked as assistant manager of the Boston Symphony Orchestra for five years before becoming executive vice-president of The Real Paper, a liberal weekly based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. During his newspaper sojourn he also moon-

lighted as a singer with The Boston Camerata.

However, after a short spell as an adjunct professor at Columbia University's School of Arts in New York he joined the family firm as a consultant in 1982. Ten years later, he was elected chairman of Rockefeller Financial Services, succeeding his father, once chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank.

The Rockefeller family fortune, estimated by Forbes magazine at \$5.5bn, is shared out among the near 100 members of the family of John D Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil and the world's first billionaire.

## In Shops settles its succession in-house

After almost two years without a managing director, In Shops, the Birmingham-based property group specialising in retail centres and serviced offices, has appointed Derek Hine, 40, to the position.

Hine joined In Shops in May 1991 as managing director of its main subsidiary, retail centres, but also took over running its executive centres last year, and was appointed to the board last December. After waiting until it was sure it had the right candidate, In Shops has now decided to name Hine

group managing director, in succession to John Hoesli, who died in 1991.

He will be responsible for day-to-day running of the group, while Tim Brookes, chief executive, will oversee strategy. Hine has 23 years of retail experience, firstly with Fine Fare, where he started as a Saturday boy in 1968 and rose to become buying director of meat and poultry. He spent a year with Dixons financial services division before being approached in 1988 to be director of Ranks

Hovis McDougall Retail, running 300 cafes and bakery shops across the UK.

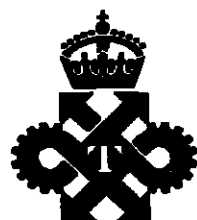
He says his main challenge at In Shops will be trying to protect clients on the retail and office side from the effects of recession, which pushed In Shops' interim pre-tax profits down from £1.05m to £903,000 last December. "Times are tough but we are certainly not lying down and crying into our hands about how terrible the recession is. If the cake is diminished, we need to get a bigger share of the cake."

Roy Roberts, the chairman of Simon Engineering, has died at the age of 64. A distinguished engineer who undertook his apprenticeship at The Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, Roberts' career was spent mainly at GKN where he became group md in 1980 and deputy chairman in 1987.

Among other appointments, he was at one time president of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, a member of the board of the UK Atomic Engineering Authority, chairman of the Dowty Group, and a member of the Engineering Council.



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# Deserved encore by a master myth-maker

Television / Christopher Dunkley

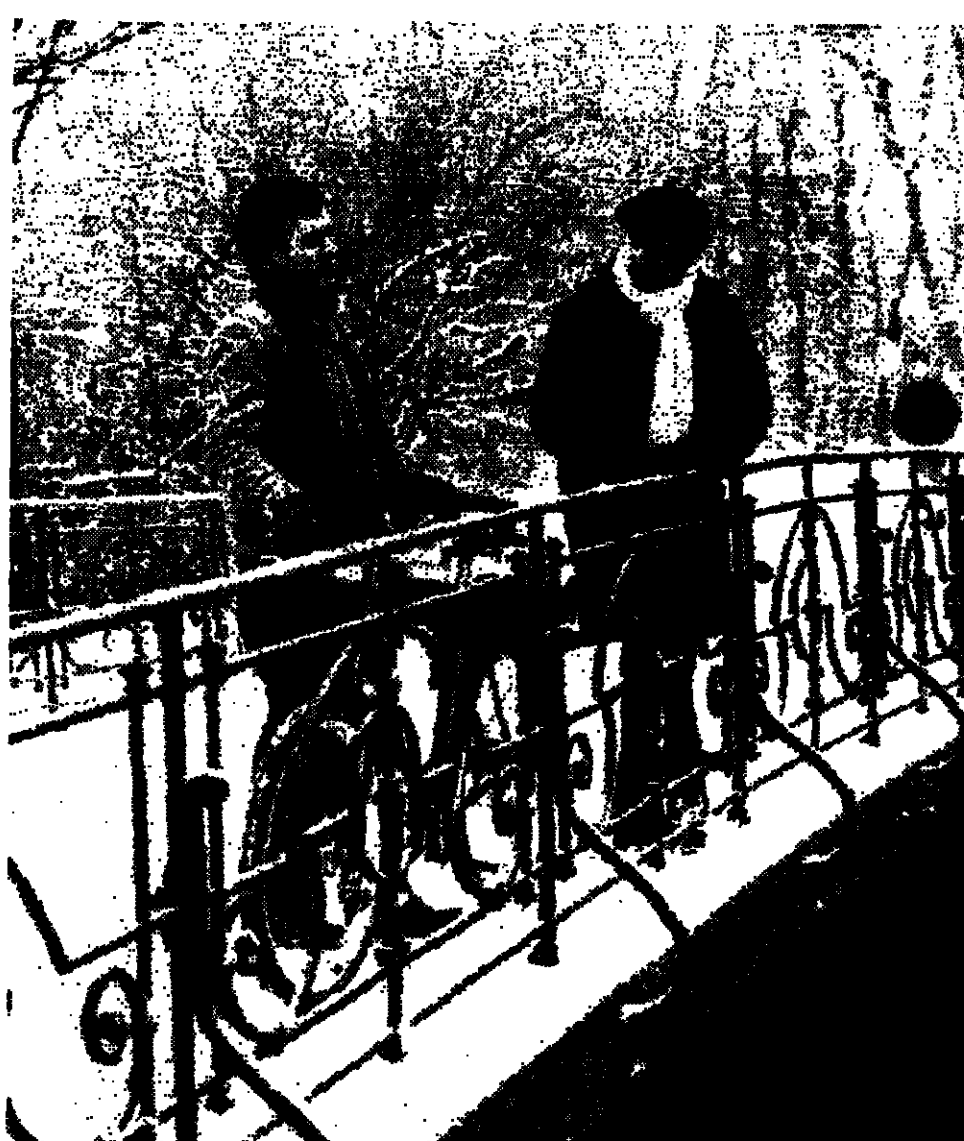
**A**STONISHINGLY, Edgar Reitz has done it again. In April 1986, BBC2 brought us his 11-part series *Heimat*, one of the few real masterpieces of television fiction. With Maria Simon as its central character, it told the story of the inhabitants of Schabbach, a village in the Hunsrück area of Germany, between 1919 and 1982. In the process it conveyed the story of the German people during much of the 20th century, particularly around the period of the second world war. BBC2 has just finished repeating the whole, entrancing saga. So deeply involved in the lives of these characters do we become - in the minutiae which vividly illustrate the greater historical events of the time - that the end of the series brings an acute sense of deprivation similar to that caused by reading the last page of *War and Peace*.

But happily this coming Saturday evening BBC2 begins screening *The Second Heimat: A New Generation* and it seems that Reitz has not only not lost his touch but, if anything, refined and improved it. This conclusion is based upon previewing only six hours of the new work - "only" seeming the right word when you realise that Part 2 is even longer than the original: 13 episodes of two hours. But such is the magic of *Heimat* I would happily have sat through the other 20 hours, had the BBC not been still working on the subtlety. Ironically, in that it is the only aspect not under Reitz's control, the sub-titling is the one technical detail which is less than satisfactory. Instead of the usual white-on-black, the BBC has gone back to the inferior white-on-white which is so hard to read against pale backgrounds.

At the centre of *Heimat* 2 is Hermann Simon, Maria's youngest son, whose passionate love affair with the older Klärchen was so cruelly destroyed by the family in Part 1. The date is now 1960 and the setting has changed from country to city, with Hermann, played by a splendid young actor named Henry Arnold, arriving in Munich to begin studying music. He becomes one of a group of young intellectuals who congregate in a large middle class house made available to them by an older woman who enjoys the company of young artists. At least for the first three episodes the development of modern music is one of the main backdrops against which the human relationships are enacted, and presumably this continues throughout.

It is not merely a matter of using music as a pretty accompaniment (much of what we hear seems to me far from pretty, though Reitz does more to endear avant garde music to me than anyone else ever has) nor of exploiting music and musicians for the sake of angst-ridden drama as in such Hollywood horrors as *Song Without End*. Reitz works the music into the very lives of his characters, and makes the difference between the new music and the old one of the keys to the differences between the generations.

Some have said that *Heimat* is merely up-market soap opera; can anybody conceive of a theme such as this in *East-Enders*? The main difference between Maria's generation and Hermann's is, of course, the experience of Nazism and here Reitz has done more, perhaps, than anyone else in the field of popular culture to deal honestly with post-war attitudes. That means neither atavistic aversion nor the perpetual winking of hands among his older characters, nor does it mean endless ruminations when Angelika and her friends are playing *Vivaldi* at a birthday party and her wealthy bourgeois father slips off to play with his radio-controlled boat in the swimming pool. It



Henry Arnold as Hermann and Daniel Smith as Juan in *The Second Heimat: A New Generation*

encapsulates a powerful Reitz cocktail of social, political and artistic attitudes. Reitz repeatedly makes clear his love of cinema. The sub-text involving the development of stills cameras in *Heimat* 1 moves on to the development of movie cameras in *Heimat* 2. Hermann's friends use an

Arriflex, the camera which was originally developed for the Wehrmacht. In Episode 3 Reitz inserts a nice joke for cinephiles when one of the students says "We've just been to a film you must see: *La Notte* by Antonioni. You come out feeling like shooting yourself!" which is spot on for period and

also true. But whatever Reitz's own predilections surely neither of these huge works would ever have been made for cinema alone, nor even have been conceived without the model provided by television serial drama. A few people might be willing to devote the money and time necessary to watch 26 hours of material in a cinema, but only a few. Millions in unmet needs are watching *Heimat* 1 on television, and probably millions more in even more places will watch *Heimat* 2. Such was the critical and popular success of Part 1 that there are 16 co-producers for Part 2, six German and 10 foreign, nearly all of them television companies, including the BBC.

However, saying that *Heimat* is a true product of the television serial tradition is not the same as saying that it is just high class soap opera. It certainly has some of the characteristics of soap opera: a big cast, considerable time devoted to the dramatisation of the everyday, and that extraordinarily powerful ability to make a set of fictional characters so attractive to the viewers that they simply want it to go on and on, feeling that the drama has become a part of their own lives.

You can hardly miss the fact that Reitz has a marvellous aptitude for narrative, and that he loves sex and music as well as cinema: the tastes of a sane and admirable individual. But the similarity between his work and TV soap is really no greater than that between *Madam Bovary* and the latest *Mills & Boon* romance which, you may say, are both novels, but that does not tell us very much. Claiming that *East-Enders* and *Heimat* are both soap operas tells us as little.

Reitz - writer, director, and producer of this vast epic - who was never exactly fumbling around in Part 1, seems even more technically assured in Part 2. Each episode now revolves around one of the friends or acquaintances of the central character. As before, the first person singular voice-over is used to powerful effect (as it was in *Brideshead Revisited*; why do so many television dramatists overlook this unique route into a character's interior life?) and Reitz is now completely relaxed about switching from one first-person voice-over to another, even within one episode. In theory it should be confusing yet it is not.

While makers of British television serial drama are besotted with the look of their period trappings (vintage cars, enamel advertisement hoardings, the precise details of Sylvia's underwear in *Lipstick On Your Collar*) Reitz can be quite casual about such things. In the first scene of passion between Hermann and Klärchen she is revealed to be wearing tights... In 1961? About five years too early, surely. Reitz is far more concerned with the effect of the whole image on the screen. He habitually uses monochrome for daytime and colour for night, a scheme which works much better than the arbitrary switching in *Heimat* 1. His pictures are often beautiful, and even though *Heimat* 1 and 2 are products of the television age he shoots as a cinema director. There is a continuous hand-held travelling shot across a river in a snow-covered park, following a conversation between Hermann and Juan in Episode 2 which lasts 1 minute 43 seconds. No television director would dare.

Yet whatever the pleasures in technique, sub-texts, social observation, and historical analysis, what matters above all in the end is the narrative factor. Reitz uses 1983 technology, but he is really the story teller beside the fire at the mouth of the cave, surrounded by a rapt audience whispering "What happened next?"

## Jazz Stunned by a mighty Pine

Those people at the Jazz Cafe in London whose last experience of jazz saxophonist Courtney Pine was his 1992 disc *To the eyes of creation* must have stumbled into the Camden night feeling dazed and confused last week, not to mention a little deaf. Leading an acoustic group which included South African Bheki Mseleku at the keyboard, the young tenorist - he is 29 - left his similarly young audience with the look of a colony of rabbits caught in the headlights of an oncoming juggernaut. Although the tunes were taken from the album, an easy and persuasive mix of reggae and soul-washed modern jazz, they were delivered with such fierce and sometimes brutal fervour, it seemed that Pine might be exorcising their memory.

"Healing Song", a bright and easy opener for the album was started caustically by Pine before he was even in sight. By the time he had reached the stand, striding around the upper gallery, drummer Mark Mondesir had established a polyrhythmic barrage of sound down below and the tenorist's sonic attack was under way. "Country Dance", another ostensibly beguiling tune, exploded into an extraordinary and somewhat two-dimensional assault with drummer Mondesir all but suffocating Wayne Batchelor's string bass. Mseleku's piano and Cameron Pierre's acoustic guitar.

Despite from Pine's abstract soprano scribbling and curtain of tenor modality finally came with the hymnal "Psalm", a traditional song beautifully arranged by the leader. Bheki Mseleku unfolded the irresistible melody, though the sound quality did him no favours and Mondesir held off for a while. The reprieve was short-lived, however, and Pine returned to purge the melody with a display of circular breathing at the just failed to find the resonant frequency of the bar's cocktail glasses.

One after another, seemingly innocent tunes were dragged by Pine and Mondesir into a harsh and free environment to be wrung of all their sweetness.

The night was not entirely filled with reed abuse, however, and further rest periods were provided by the appearance of Talvin Singh whose reverberating tabla led Pine's soprano in a cheeky duet. Mseleku tried his hand again with a cut from his own album "Celebration" but the sound from the keyboard had not improved and the eager "township" contagion was all but lost.

This sort of display of firepower and technical brilliance gone haywire is not to everyone's taste of course, but in Pine's hands it does have a curious purging effect on the senses. When it comes out of a composing and organisational talent as fresh as his, it is exhilarating.

Andrew Clark

Garry Booth

## Theatre A powerful experience way down South

From *The Mississippi Delta* at the Cochrane Theatre is a partly autobiographical play about the Deep South written by Endesha Ida Mae Holland. In America, the play opened in Buffalo and New York, and in England at the Young Vic (1989). This Talawa Theatre production makes powerful, high-energy theatre: fine acting in a bare set, with no props.

The central characters, shared by the three actors, represent the black American experience during the civil rights activism of the 1950s and 1960s. The play is set in Greenwood, Mississippi in the early 1960s, and stretches forward and back from there. By then, that day in 1955 when Rosa Parks failed to give up her bus seat in Montgomery, Alabama had become civil rights history; Martin Luther King emerged as the leader there in 1955, but the activists were slower to reach the delta.

There are pictures of domestic toil, a terrifying breach-birth scene, and vignettes of neighbourhood characters; out of these, Ida Mae Holland's character emerges with a decency and honesty born of hard work and deprivation: "Yo' c'n look over yo' friends when yo' is low, but yo' sure c'n't look over them when yo' is pickin' in high cotton."

She tries erotic dancing, prostitution, self education and then college in Minneapolis, north of Memphis, en route to Chicago, the diner car joins the train - "and anyone can get there" - but before she graduates, her mother is burned to death by arsonists, the scent of Magnolia and burnt flesh on the delta breeze.

The final scene pays tribute to Martin Luther King, Jimi Hendrix (the inimitable "Star Spangled Banner") and Alice Walker, who says simply, "we are not the first to suffer." While Ida Mae Holland lacks the popular appeal of Toni Morrison or the depth of Zora Neale Hurston, she does speak for black women's lives: like her mother, "she taught us we could do more things than she had words for."

The easy physicality and trust between the actors (Pauline Black, Joette Bushell-Mingo and Joy Richardson) creates and focuses energy on stage, while the direction (Annie Castledine and Sue MacLennan) drives the action quickly around the bare set walled with rusty corrugated iron. The *capella* singing, however, tempts one to wish for something more substantial: some delta blues on slide and harmonica would add musical body, but the singing at the revivalist funeral is still unforgettable.

This is an opera of opposites, all of them underlined in Francis Poulenc's staging. Robert Doherty's representation of the opera allowed each scene to dovetail into the next. Here was the turmoil of Paris next to the solace of Compiegne, revolutionary hysteria face-to-face with religious order, mundane chatter amid a world of prayer. This most Catholic of operas made strong theatrical sense - never more so than when the nuns mounted the scaffold one-by-one in the final scene. And it would be hard to imagine Poulenc's serene, unspectacular music sounding more heartfelt than in the hands of Michel Plasson and the Suisse Romande Orchestra.

On these terms, the charge of longwindedness is hard to sustain. The criticism might be better targeted at *Hérodiade*, judging by the Zurich Opera House's belated 150th anniversary tribute to Massenet. This grand operatic treatment of the Salome story has survived on the fringe of the repertoire as a vehicle for star singers. What it really needs is a trenchant modern staging.

Zurich built this revival around José Carreras and Grace Bumbry, but Carreras cancelled, causing renewed worries about his health. Miss Bumbry, pro that she is, struggled valiantly to give the show some credibility. The odds were against her. Carreras' replacement as John the Baptist was Bolko Zvetanov, a young Bulgarian with a sweet voice, who sang with little dramatic purpose in a mush of vowel sounds. The virginal Salome was Cecilia Gasdia, who was similarly unconvincing, despite her touching delivery of the first act aria "Il est doux". As Herod, the American lyric baritone Rodney Gilmore enunciated well, but seemed temperamentally at odds with such a mature part. More convincing were László Földes's Phaulon and the orchestra under Manfred Honeck, who made the most of Massenet's fund of lush melodies.

## Opera in Switzerland French without tears

Andrew St George

### INTERNATIONAL ARTS GUIDE

#### ■ BONN

Valery Panov's new production of Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet* can be seen at the Opera House tonight, Sun, next Tues and Fri. The repertoire also includes Giancarlo del Monaco's productions of *Der Freischütz* (tomorrow) and *Otello* with Julia Varady and Alexei Steblianko (Sat), plus Puccini's *Trittico* staged by three women directors (next Wed). Steblianko and Larissa Shevchenko give a song recital on Mon (773667).

#### ■ COLOGNE

**CONCERTS**  
Tonight: Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie plays Bach and Scheide, with soloists Christian Altenburger and David Garings. Tomorrow and Sun: Moscow Gude's Orchestra in an evening of Russian dance and song. Fri: Wolf-Dieter Hauchchild conducts German Youth Orchestra in works by Brahms and Rakhmaninov. Sun morning, Mon and Tues evening: James Conlon conducts Gürzenich Orchestra in

works by Mozart and Mahler, with piano soloist Radu Lupu. Next Wed: Kirov Opera (Philharmonie 2801) **OPERA/DANCE**  
Tonight and next Wed: Rossini double bill. Tomorrow: James Conlon conducts Ljubiša Chelidze's new production of *Così fan tutte*. Fri: Billy Budd. Sat and next Tues: TanzForum triple bill (Opernhaus 21 8400) **THEATRE**  
A new production of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, directed by Torsten Fischer, opens at the Schauspielhaus on Sat, repeated Sun and Mon. A new production of Lorca's *Donna Rosita*, directed by Marlene Steerwitz, opens at Kammerspiele on Sun, repeated Mon. Repertory at the Schlosserei includes Nigel Williams' classroom drama *Class Enemy* (221 8400)

#### ■ COPENHAGEN

Royal Theatre Tonight, tomorrow, Sat: John Neumeier's production of Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet*. Fri and Mon: *La traviata*. Next Wed: Drot og Marsk, Danish historical opera (3314 1002)

#### ■ DUSSELDORF

Deutsche Oper am Rhein Tonight and tomorrow: ballet double bill choreographed by Heinz Spoerli. Fri: Merry Widow. Sat and next Tues: ballet mixed bill, including Forsythe's *In the middle*. Sun: Der Rosenkavalier (211-8908 211). Dulsburg Theatre has Giselle on Fri and the first night of Pet Halmen's new production of Turandot conducted by Fabio Luisi on Sat, repeated next Tues. Thurs

and Sun (203-3009 100) Schauspielhaus Tonight: Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Tomorrow and next Wed: Richter's *Leone and Lena*. Fri and Mon: Brecht's *Her Punilla*. The Kammerspiele has David Mouchart-Samora's new production of Gorki's *Summer Guests* and Klaus Pohl's topical play about German xenophobia, *Die schöne Fremde* (211-162200/211-369911)

#### ■ FRANKFURT

Alte Oper Tonight and tomorrow: West Side Story. Fri and Sat: Valery Gergiev conducts Kirov Opera concert performances of Boris Godunov and Queen of Spades. Next Tues: Eivind Aadland conducts European Community Chamber Orchestra in works by Britten, McCabe, Mozart and Haydn, with piano soloist László Berman. Tues (Mozart Saal): Endellion Quartet (1340 400) Opernhaus Fri and Sun: Il matrimonio segreto. Sat and Mon: Rigoletto with Eduard Tuganov (238061)

#### ■ GOTHENBURG

Konsertthuset Tomorrow evening, Sat afternoon: Heinz Wallberg conducts Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Brahms' *German Requiem*, with Gurne Bohman and Siegfried Lorenz. Next Tues: recital for two pianos by Bengt Forsberg and Erik Risberg. Next Wed: Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra (167000) Stora Teatern Tonight, Sat, next Tues: Wed: Robin Stapleton conducts Francesca Zambello's

production of *Faust*, with Ingvar Wixell. Runs till June 5 (131300)

#### ■ HAMBURG

Staatsoper Tonight and Sun: Otello with Sharon Sweet and René Kollo. Tomorrow, Fri, next Wed and Thurs: Well's *Mahagonny*. Sat: Neumeier's ballet set to Mahler's Third Symphony (351721). Mon and Tues in Deutsches Schauspielhaus: Uta Lampert (248713) Musiktheater Tomorrow: Pinchas Zukerman recital. Fri: Julietta Gréco. Sun morning, Mon evening: Claus Peter Flor conducts Hamburg State Philharmonic Orchestra in Elgar's *Cello Concerto* (Truus Moré) and Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony. Sun evening: Mozart's *C minor Mass* (354414)

#### ■ MUNICH

Herkulesaal der Residenz Tonight: Marek Janowski conducts Bavarian State Opera concert performance of *Parsifal*, with Siegfried Jerusalem, Jan-Hendrik Rootering, Wolfgang Brendel and Waltraud Meier (221316). Mon: Hagen Quartet. Tues: Juillard Quartet (299901) Quilfische-Theater Tomorrow, Sat, next Tues, Thurs, Sat: Peter Schneider conducts Theo Adam's production of *Capriccio*, with Pamela Coburn (221316) Prinzregententheater Tomorrow, Fri, Sun: Bavarian State Opera production of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Busoni's *Arcadino* (221316) Gastspiel Tomorrow and Fri: Leonard Statkin conducts Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in Vaughan

Williams' *Talis Fantasia*, Edward MacDowell's *Second Piano Concerto* (Jeffrey Stiglitz) and Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony (4809 8614)

#### ■ STOCKHOLM

Royal Opera Tomorrow, Sat afternoon, next Mon: Pelléas et Mélisande. Fri: Les cortès d'Hoffmann. Next Tues: Roccaccio (248240) Konserthuset Tomorrow and Sat afternoon: Nicholas Cleburne conducts Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus in Haydn's *Seasons*. Next Tues: Hans Vonk conducts Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra in works by Beethoven and Bruckner, with piano soloist Roland Pöntinen (244130) Berwaldhallen Fri and Sat afternoon: Evgeny Svetlanov conducts Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Mahler's Ninth Symphony. Next Thurs and Fri: Svetlanov conducts Rakhmaninov and Rimsky-Korsakov (784 1800)

#### ■ PARIS

● Tonight's performance at the Bastille is Bob Wilson's production of *Die Zauberflöte*, with David Rendall and Cynthia Haymon. In repertory till April 27 with Robert Carsen's production of *Manon Lescaut*, with Miriam Gauci and Vasile Moldovanu. Fri: Myung-Whun Chung conducts the Opéra Orchestra in a Berg and Mahler concert, with soprano Cheryl Studer (4473 1300) ● Vladimir Fedoseyev conducts Orchestre National de France in works by Sibelius and Tchaikovsky

tomorrow at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, with violin soloist Julian Rachlin. Next Tues: June Anderson song recital (4952 5050)

#### ■ STUTTGART

Staatstheater Tonight: Alan Hacker conducts *Così fan tutte*. Tomorrow and Sun: Tom Cairns' production of *La bohème*. Fri: *Die Zauberflöte* with Glen Winslade and Helmut Berger-Turna. Sat and next Wed: Gabriele Ferro conducts Johannes Schaeff's production of *Wozzeck*, with John Bröcheler. The drama repertory in Kleines Haus includes a new production of Odon von Horvath's *Glaube Liebe Hoffnung*, plus Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and *Requiem for a Drunkard*. Theater im Depot has a new production of Shout Across the River by British dramatist Stephen Poliakoff (221795)

#### ■ LEIPZIG

Gewandhaus Tomorrow and Fri: Claudio Scimone conducts Gewandhaus Orchestra in works by Donizetti, Brahms, Clementi and Respighi, with piano soloist Michael Ponti. Sat: Ponti plays sonatas by Beethoven, Liszt and Chopin. Sun: songs and piano trios by Mendelssohn. Next Tues: Krzysztof Penderecki conducts MDR Symphony Orchestra in works by Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Penderecki, with cello soloist Tim Hugh (7132 280)

European Cable and Satellite Business TV (All times are Central European Time)

**MONDAY TO THURSDAY**  
Super Channel: European Business Today 0730; 2230  
Monday Super Channel: West of Moscow 1230.  
Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 0630  
Wednesday Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 2130  
Thursday Sky News: Financial Times Reports 2030; 0130  
Friday Super Channel: European Business Today 0730; 2230  
Sky News: Financial Times Reports 0630  
Saturday Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 0930  
Sky News: West of Moscow 1130; 2230  
Sunday Super Channel: West of Moscow 1830  
Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 1900  
Sky News: West of Moscow 0230; 0330  
Sky News: Financial Times Reports 1330; 2030

**Arts Guide**  
Monday: Berlin, New York and Paris.  
Tuesday: Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Chicago, Washington.  
Wednesday: France, Germany, Scandinavia.  
Thursday: Italy, Spain, Athens, London, Prague.  
Friday: Exhibitions Guide.



## Edward Mortimer



"Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord..."

One no longer hears that collect read in Anglican churches on Good Friday, as one used to when I was a schoolboy. At some point, well before the phrase "politically correct" became current, it was quietly dropped. The words might be construed as offensive to the categories of people mentioned: Jews, Moslems, atheists and Christians of other denominations. And since the Church of England does not wish to cause offence, it altered its liturgy.

Of course, if you really believe - as the author of the collect presumably did - that people who do not share your religious beliefs are missing their only chance of eternal bliss, you should pray for their conversion whether it offends them or not. But few Anglicans nowadays do believe that. Even the Pope, I suspect, no longer insists absolutely on the doctrine of extra ecclesiam nulla salus (no salvation outside the church). He seems to regard other religions, especially monotheistic ones, less as competitors than as potential allies of Christianity in the great battle between God and mammon.

Britain's Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks, shares that view. In his 1990 Reith Lectures he urged religious minorities to support the established church, it being the only national institution capable of giving a religious dimension to Britain's public culture. The argument is quoted with approval by a Moslem scholar, Tariq Modood, in one of the thoughtful essays published last year under the title *Not Easy Being British* (Routledge, £7.95). Modood is anxious to head off an attempt by secularists to use the supposed sensitivity of non-Christian minorities to advance the cause of disestablishment - something which, he says, has not been demanded by any minority faith organisation. Moslems found much more

## Foes with shared values

There is much in common between Islam and the west

understanding for their campaign against Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* among the Christian clergy than they did in the secular intelligentsia. That may seem surprising. In earlier ages Christian writers depicted Islam as a vicious and fanatical heresy, and it was anticlerical liberals who first painted a different picture, of a civilised Islam, which they contrasted with the reactionary obscurantism of the Catholic establishment at home.

Now the boot is on the other

Some Christians see Islam as an ally to stem the tide of liberal triumphalism

foot. Islam is again seen as a threat to established western values, but those values have become more liberal than Christian, and some Christians see Islam as a possible ally in an effort to stem the tide of liberal triumphalism.

Is there in fact an irreconcilable conflict between Islam and western values? Many on both sides would say yes. Many Moslems see the west as completely godless and amoral, dominated by crime and pornography at home, brutal and arrogant in its behaviour towards the rest of the world, and nursing a special animus against them, the Moslems. From Bombay to Bosnia, passing by Iraq and Palestine, Moslems see themselves as victims, with "the west" always directly or indirectly the aggressor. In his powerful TV series, *Living Islam*, starting tonight on BBC2, and in the

accompanying book (BBC Books, £15.99), the Pakistani anthropologist Akbar Ahmed even called the war in Bosnia the "last crusade".

Similarly, many in the west see Islam as irredeemably violent and repressive. Neither side has any difficulty in finding evidence to support its view, and of course each is reinforced by the other.

But both "Islam" and the "west" can be regarded either as ideals or as civilisations. If we think of them as ideals, we may have difficulty in defining them precisely because so many different people identify with them in each case and there is such a variety of interpretations on offer. Clearly they are not identical: the west puts more emphasis on the value of each individual human being, while Islam insists on the centrality of God. But there is a considerable overlap in the core values that both proclaim: peace, justice, compassion, tolerance; even equality and the use of reason to acquire knowledge.

If we think of them as civilisations we are confronted with even greater diversity on both sides. They are composed of millions of human beings, nearly all of whom fall short in practice of the ideals they claim to believe in; and here too there is an increasing overlap. Not only do some 10m Moslems live in the west; equally significant is the presence of so many aspects of western civilisation within Moslem countries.

More than anything it is the impossibility of making a complete break with the west that drives some Moslems to desperation. They may succeed in defining an "Islam" that is completely antithetical to the west, but their chances of imposing it durably on any part of the Moslem world are virtually zero. Revolutionary Iran and conservative Saudi Arabia alike are driven all the time to make compromises, though in very different ways.

The Moslems' extremist myth of a monolithic and malign west is as futile and misleading as the view, current in some western circles, that a monolithic, malign Islam has replaced communism as our most dangerous enemy. This indeed is the main point of Prof Ahmed's series; as an articulate Moslem living in the west, he hopes to persuade both sides to see good as well as bad in each other.

Mr Ed van der Heijden tunes his car radio to the BBC while he speeds towards Antwerp and a hotel bed. A highway exit sign beckons motorists to nearby Boom as Norman Lamont, the UK chancellor, unveils his Budget for sustained recovery.

There is to be extra help for Britain's exporters. Mr van der Heijden knows a lot about exporting. He also knows a great deal about deep fryers, coffee grinders, rice cookers, blenders and mixers. Ask him anything about German buns, Belgian bread or Danish meatballs. Test him on calibrated food pushers, juice centrifuges or cordless kettle jugs.

As an export manager for Kenwood, the Hampshire-based manufacturer of food preparation appliances, Mr van der Heijden, 48, is a mastermind on his products and his marketplace. That is a requirement of the job if you battle daily for business against big guns such as Philips, Moulinex, Braun and Bosch.

Kenwood, with a strong brand name behind it, annually turns out 1.75m appliances from its Havant factory and survives on exports. Two-thirds of its £100m annual sales are made outside the UK, one-third of them in continental Europe.

At Kenwood's heart is the Chef, a food mixer launched 45 years ago and which has since whisked and beaten its way into more than 7m kitchens. Something of a cook himself, Mr van der Heijden talks of the appliance in reverential tones.

He and his colleagues are at the sharp end of Mr Lamont's calls for an export-led recovery. His job relies on encouraging and cajoling distributors and agents to sell Kenwood. His salary is performance-related: fewer sales mean less take-home pay for him and lower earnings for Britain.

The completion of the single market, with its 34m customers, means little for companies already well entrenched on the Continent. Trading barriers may be down but markets are still characterised by wide differences in pricing, distribution and retailing patterns.

There is no such thing as common pricing. The Chef, for example, costs twice as much in Switzerland as in the UK. While big, national retailers ease the logistics of distribution in the UK, a proliferation of small independent businesses in Germany means more complicated supply chains.

There may have been big

Michael Cassell follows an export manager to the front lines of the battle to boost UK sales abroad  
Long and winding road to recovery

ability is excellent; prices are stable and competitive".

As Mr van der Heijden leaves the room to take a telephone call from a Polish customer, Mr Beckmann welcomes Kenwood's recent expansion into products such as shavers and hair dryers. But he adds: "They left it very late. They were seen as a one-product company without the range needed to take on the competition."

With a £50,000 order in the bag, Mr van der Heijden returns to explain that Beska can now import some Kenwood-designed products direct from the company's new, low-cost production base in China. Quality is guaranteed, he says, drawing a discreet veil over a recent setback with an early consignment of Chinese-made coffee-making machines.

Mr Beckmann looks over a draft contract to extend his Kenwood partnership for another four years. He has one

big complaint, shared by other Kenwood suppliers: "There is nothing like enough spent on advertising. The competition spends millions."

Kenwood accepts the criticism but cannot escape its status as a second division manufacturer without the financial resources available to big league players such as Bosch and Braun. Distributors must, therefore, play a large part in promoting products.

After a quick Taiwanese meal, Mr van der Heijden checks out a huge electrical superstore at Cuijk. Kenwood products seem swamped; Mr van der Heijden admires an in-store video promotion by Philips and wants the same. More store visits follow.

Next morning, he is in Aartselaar, near Antwerp, for a meeting with Jacques van den Bogaert, the growing proprietor of Asogem, Kenwood's Belgian distributor. Thirty years ago, Mr van den

Bogaert struck a deal with Kenneth Wood over a bottle of Scotch. His business now sells more than £2m of Kenwood products a year, less than Kenwood sales in France, Austria, Denmark or Germany, but still an important market.

The conversation is conducted in English, French and Flemish. Mr van den Bogaert generally holds Kenwood in high regard but reckons it has been slow off the mark with new products: "Belgium buys 800,000 coffee-makers a year. What have I got to offer from Kenwood?"

Patience, says Mr van der Heijden, the Kenwood models are on the way. Mr van den Bogaert is also concerned about Kenwood's prices. "Why aren't they reflecting the near-20 per cent devaluation in sterling?" he asks. Kenwood, Mr van der Heijden reminds his customer, has changed to invoicing in local currencies in order to stabilise selling prices. "Devaluation was a bonus but we bear the risk on currency fluctuations. He didn't plan on offering to take lower margins when sterling strengthened," says the export manager.

Mr van den Bogaert laughs but is not amused. He adds: "They [the British] are financially very bright but still not commercial enough." But Thierry Vander Elst, Asogem's commercial director, balances the criticism by heaping praise on the commercial section of the local British consulate. "It is excellent. They leave the others standing."

Lunch at the local tennis club ends in a skirmish about plans to expand the network of family-run Kenwood dealer centres around Belgium. Asogem had originally suggested up to 150 but now talks of 75. It is the first Mr van der Heijden has heard of the plans.

He next drives to Brussels near Brussels, where Agnes Willems runs just such a Kenwood centre. She seems unhappy about selling quality products marked "Made in China".

It is early evening and the man from Kenwood is done for the day. He sets off for the Luxembourg border and another hotel. At the weekend he will be home to see his 15-year-old daughter and to plan the next trip.

He says he still loves his job, but insists that he works to live, not the other way round. But ask him for a personal ambition and he instinctively responds: "Five per cent of the European market for men's shavers - that would be great."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL

Fax 071 873 5938. Letters transmitted should be clearly typed and not hand written. Please set fax for finest resolution

## Technically superior economic model - but of little benefit

From Prof Wynne Godley.

Sir, According to Jeremy Bray (Letters, April 7), "Despite ill-informed press criticism, economic modelling practices in the UK are in most respects technically well ahead of those in the US" - the result, apparently, of the "econometric methods developed by Prof David Hendry".

Ahead of the US or not, Prof Hendry's technical advances have not resulted in any detectable improvement in the ability of the large-scale models developed under this influence to make accurate forecasts. Nor has there been any increase, flowing from best practice econometrics, in the understanding of how modern

industrial economies function as systems. So what, usefully, can it mean to say we are "technically well ahead" of the US?

In my view, adverse press comment on the performance of the relevant models (not only the Treasury's model, but those of the London Business School and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research) has not been "ill-informed" at all. It has been fully justified by the deplorable, and extremely damaging, way in which public discussion, not to mention governments, have been misled by these monsters.

Wynne Godley, King's College, Cambridge

## Rather rapid rotation

From J A D'Arcy.

Sir, John Patten, the education secretary, may be the nation's headmaster (Man in the News, April 11) and, if he is, the fifth in six years. Joseph (early 1987), Baker, MacGregor and Clarke have all had their day. One wonders what readers would make of a school, or for that matter a company, that has had so many chief executives in so short a time.

J A D'Arcy, King's Walk, Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN16 9DB

## Unemployed in suspense

From Mr John Edmonds.

Sir, Samuel Brittan (Economic Viewpoint, April 8) is sympathetic to Professor Patrick Minford's view that the equilibrium rate of unemployment in the UK is 1m.

Does either Mr Brittan or Prof Minford have any idea when we might reach that equilibrium? The other 2m would like to know. John Edmonds, general secretary, GMB Union, 33-34 Worpole Road, London SW19 4DD

## UK must learn a lesson from European partners

From Dr Denis MacShane.

Sir, Your editorial, "Labour and industry" (April 7), stressed the importance of institutional relationships (labour-management relations, pay, etc) inside companies instead of technological quick-fixes.

The politics of free collective bargaining practised through the 1980s bumped up labour costs in Britain far above its competitors'. The increases in productivity brought about by mass redundancies (2.3m manufacturing jobs disappeared between 1980 and 1990) could not compensate.

You refer to the "miracle companies of the east" but one of the most striking aspects of their pay relations is the much smaller ratio between salaries paid to workers and to top executives. In Britain, this gap has widened significantly, is widening and must diminish before the more harmonious workplace you rightly identify as the key to success can come into being. Perhaps, instead of a statutory minimum wage, Labour should propose a statutory maximum one.

I also question the endless reference to Asia. Surely there are plenty of European examples of countries which manage their affairs better than Britain. Small ones such as the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland have better records in industrial output, trade and so on. And despite horrendous difficulties occasioned by unification or political crisis, the economic records of Germany and France are far better over the past decade than the UK's.

Institutional relationships in both countries play their part. The new French government has just called in the unions to discuss economic questions while the workers on the board of Daimler-Benz and Volkswagen are working constructively with managers to re-shape the companies.

It was sad, therefore, to read the predictable 1980s response of the Confederation of British Industry to Labour's worker directors proposal. At least they merit reasoned discussion. The CBI should try to learn from what works in other countries.

Denis MacShane, 54 bis route des Acacias, Case postale 1516, CH-1227 Geneva, Switzerland

## Another Islamic bank in Europe

From Mr James Higgs.

Sir, John Gapper's article "UK acts against Islamic bank" (April 1) begins: "London-based Albaraka International Bank, the only Islamic bank in Europe..." In fact there is in Copenhagen an entirely separate bank run on Islamic principles - the A/S Islamic Bank International of Denmark - which I was visiting just last month.

James Higgs, 71 Oxford Gardens, London W10 5UJ

## Vance-Owen plan must be adjusted to achieve greater equity

From Mr George Tivator.

Sir, For the second time in a year, the US and the European Community are attempting to impose their will on Bosnia's 1.5m Serbs. A year ago, the "independence" of Bosnia was recognised by the west despite the objections of the Bosnian Serbs. The Serbs, who constitute a third of Bosnia's population and inhabit 60 per cent of its territory, opposed independence prior to an agreement on constitutional principles.

Predictably, the Bosnian Serbs took up arms to resist being forcibly incorporated in an inherently hostile state. The

consequences of their rebellion have been dreadful.

Today, the West is attempting to force the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Vance-Owen plan. Although the Vance-Owen plan goes a long way toward recognising the rights of all three Bosnian groups, including the Bosnian Serbs, it stops short of an equitable and lasting solution. The Vance-Owen plan divides Bosnia into 10 semi-autonomous regions dominated by either Bosnia's Croats, Moslems or Serbs.

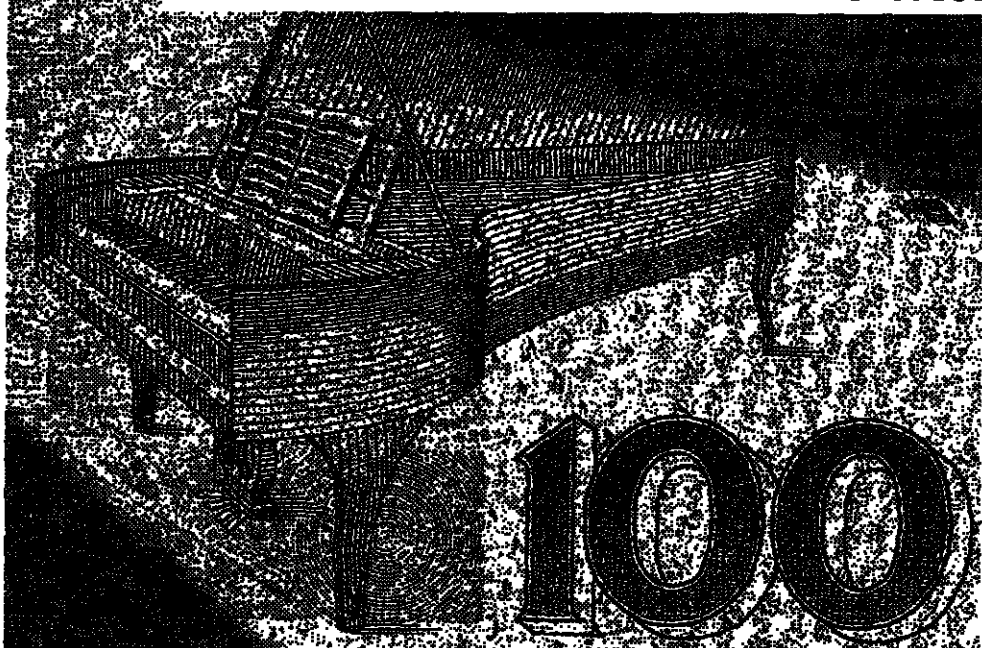
The Bosnian Croats accept the Vance-Owen plan without reservation because it gives them far more territory than they could have possibly expected. The Bosnian Moslems reluctantly accept the plan because, at present, it represents the best prospect for foreign military intervention. The cost to the Moslems, however, is the abandonment of their goal of a unitary state.

The Bosnian Serbs object to the Vance-Owen plan on two points. First, the map leaves large numbers of Serbs in areas dominated by Moslems and Croats; and second, it denies the Serbs a land corridor between the large Serb-inhabited region in north-west-

ern Bosnia and Serbia itself. Given the present animosity between the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Croats and Moslems, an isolated Serb region in Nagorno-Karabakh of Europe. It is inconceivable that the Serbs will voluntarily accept this arrangement.

Adjustments must be made to the Vance-Owen plan to ensure that it is fair to all three Bosnian groups. Otherwise, the country will be condemned to decades of misery. George Tivator, 52-62 Bishopsgate, London EC2N 4AR

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## FINANCIAL TIMES

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Wednesday April 14 1993

## Mr Keynes and the Japanese

"PRACTICAL MEN, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences," wrote John Maynard Keynes in the General Theory, "are usually the slave of some definite economic dogma." Which academic scribbler have Tokyo's bureaucrats been studying as they prepared Japan's second fiscal package in less than nine months?

Certainly not the economists who advised President Clinton that a package of tax increases and spending cuts would improve US economic performance. The voices in the air, encouraging Japanese politicians to spend their way out of recession, appear to come from Mr Keynes himself, with a little neo-Keynesian encouragement from Washington.

Not that Mr Keynes, experienced in the ways of international finance, would disagree with the American's need for Clinton-style fiscal austerity. The high long-term interest rates that US-style fiscal profligacy deliver have damaging effects on economic activity.

Japan's advantage is that it used the fat years of the 1980s to build-up a healthy fiscal surplus. By prudently avoided placing itself in a position in which old-style Keynesianism is counter-productive, it has been able to run down this surplus as economic growth has slowed.

## Market reactions

Japanese fiscal activism, far from frightening investors, has allowed long-term bond rates to fall by a percentage point since the first fiscal package was announced and remain 1½ points lower than in America. The combination of the latest ¥13,200bn (¥175bn) fiscal package and a recent government-managed revival of animal spirits, has lifted the Tokyo stock market through the 20,000 barrier, closing 44 per cent above last August's low, while the yen has risen to a record high against the dollar.

Yesterday's announcement is also an impressive propaganda coup. By announcing the package on the eve of a summit of the world's leading finance ministers in Tokyo, the government secured the public praise of US Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, despite yesterday's news that Japan's

trade surplus rose to \$111bn (¥73bn) in the 1992 fiscal year. But will it work? In the short-term, Japan's fiscal activism cannot fail to boost economic growth. The package, adjusted for the various dodges and leakages which enrage zealous US officials, will inject around ¥8,500bn (¥49bn) worth of new spending into the economy this fiscal year, equivalent to 1.8 per cent of Japanese gross national product. The Economic Planning Agency confidently expects that the spending, mainly on infrastructure, to push GNP growth above 3 per cent this fiscal year.

## Private investment

Yet fiscal expansion on such a scale cannot replace private spending and investment for long without leading to structural fiscal problems. Worryingly, the prospects of a marked revival in private-sector activity look poor, despite modest signs of an upturn in housing starts, car sales and broad money supply.

Retail sales to nervous consumers are still falling and companies say they plan to cut investment spending again this year. The appreciation in the value of the yen, which fiscal expansion and the revival in the stock market have already delivered, will further postpone a revival in Japanese industrial activity. In the short term, it will also make the trade surplus larger as yen import prices fall.

Even if investment demand picks up, it will take years rather than months before Japan's debt-burdened banks are able to support a recovery in private investment. The revival in the stock market, and widening of interest margins, have eased the prudential pressures on the banks. But the yield curve remains flat, suggesting a recovery in private investment is still some way off.

In short, the revival in consumer demand for US imports and a fall in the trade surplus look many months away. The spirit of Keynes lives on in Tokyo. But, for all Japan's far-sighted prudence and political gullie, modern-day pump-priming looks unlikely to produce quickly what the Japanese need and the US wants.

## Recoupling the through train

IT WAS tempting yesterday, after Britain and China had put an end to months of wrangling by announcing the imminent resumption of talks on the political future of Hong Kong, to ask which side blinked. Was it the British or the Chinese government that made the crucial concession on the precise role to be played by Hong Kong officials in the talks? Or is it Mr Chris Patten, Hong Kong's governor, who has gone the extra distance by agreeing not to initiate the debate on his modest proposals for political reform in the colony's Legislative Council (LegCo) while the talks continue?

Entertaining as they may be, however, these questions are irrelevant. Yesterday's announcement is a compromise in which the parties have side-stepped obstacles of their own creation. It was always certain that, were talks to resume, they would take place between the two sovereign powers in dispute, Britain and China, with Hong Kong officials playing something of a secondary role; it was never plausible that they could happen, as China seemed until yesterday to be demanding, with these officials barred from seats at the negotiating table.

The resumption of dialogue is undoubtedly a welcome development for Hong Kong - provided it gets off to a brisk and businesslike start. Without it Mr Patten knew he was in a fragile position, facing the prospect of a difficult LegCo debate on his proposals buttressed by threats from Beijing, and the risk of a stand-off thereafter that might have seriously debilitated his governorship through the last four years of British colonial rule. By agreeing to talk, Britain and China have at least taken the essential first step towards reconciling the "through train" that was supposed to pull Hong Kong through this delicate period of transition.

## Clear timetable

Yet there are also risks for Mr Patten in the new course. The most obvious is that China, rather than engaging in a serious debate about Hong Kong's future political structure, will see the talks as an opportunity to mount a protracted filibuster with the aim of completely derailing Mr Patten's plans. The timetable is not

open-ended. One of the governor's proposals affects elections to local district boards in the colony, due to take place next year; another would mean that officials elected to that occasion would have an important role to play in choosing members of LegCo in 1995.

This means that if a balanced package of electoral reforms is to have a chance of coming into effect, it will have to be passed by the Legislative Council by the autumn. If the talks starting on April 22 move slowly, or not at all, the British and Hong Kong governments may thus again find themselves facing a familiar dilemma later this year - whether to pull out of talks and press ahead with reforms in the teeth of Chinese threats to set up a shadow Hong Kong government before 1997 and to declare any changes null and void thereafter.

## LegCo's role

Talks, then, can not be an end in themselves, or indefinite in duration. Their value for Britain and Hong Kong will lie in seeking to ascertain what China itself wants for the colony before and after 1997, for while Beijing has been voluble in its denunciation of Mr Patten and all his works since October, it has been noticeably reluctant to come forward with proposals of its own.

If the negotiation means some amendment to the governor's reform proposals, so be it - provided that the outcome can be debated by, and is acceptable to, the Legislative Council. Strengthening LegCo as an autonomous legislature is, after all, Mr Patten's clearest and most sensible objective - and is more important than the precise way in which he proposes to tinker with electoral arrangements. Enhancing LegCo in this manner is also the best test of China's sincerity in having agreed that Hong Kong should be ruled after 1997 under the principle of "one country, two systems".

It remains entirely possible, of course, that China's objection is not to Mr Patten's precise proposals, or even to the unilateral manner in which he put them forward, but to the whole idea of having such an independent-minded legislature in Hong Kong. If that is the case, no amount of talking will suffice to bridge the gap.

There can be few jobs more daunting than the one facing Mr Franco Bernabè, chief executive of ENI, Italy's state energy concern and the world's eighth largest oil group.

The 44-year-old economist must pick up the pieces of an industrial empire stricken by involvement in corruption investigations and prepare its businesses for privatisation.

His efforts are being watched closely from abroad. Potential investors will scrutinise his attempts to reshape the diverse group. Foreign governments will keep an equally close eye on emerging evidence of fraud in ENI's overseas operations.

It is at home, however, that the group's affairs have caused most disruption. ENI has emerged as one of the principal paymasters in an elaborate system of graft that has sustained Italy's main political parties for two decades. Its affairs have caused the resignation of two ministers in less than two months and contributed to the enforced departure of Mr Bettino Craxi from the leadership of the Socialist party.

Mr Gabriele Cagliari, ENI's chairman, resigned on March 9 after being arrested on charges of alleged corruption and falsifying accounts. The heads of four leading ENI subsidiaries - Agip (oil and gas exploration), Snam (gas supplies), Salim (drilling) and Nuovo Pignone (turbines) - have also been arrested on similar charges. All are now helping magistrates unravel a darker side of what has been the most dynamic group in Italy's unwieldy public sector.

In the midst of this storm, Mr Bernabè has remained calm. "Although very much alone, he knows what he wants and has had strong support from the government," observes one colleague. "Now that Cagliari's gone and the political parties are too discredited to interfere, he has been free."

His position has been reinforced by the appointment on March 31 of a new five-man board, composed of technocrats and oil industry experts. But he has enemies from within the political establishment who oppose his plans to shake up ENI, concentrate on core businesses and carry out extensive privatisation. "Bernabè sees privatisation essentially as a means of reducing the capacity of the state to interfere in corporate management," observes a senior ENI executive. ENI is the second largest state group with annual sales of over £50,000bn (£20.8bn) and 130,000 employees worldwide.

Many politicians are reluctant to lose this source of patronage. Last June, "old guard" politicians from the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties tried to get Mr Bernabè sacked. The move backfired, and when ENI was converted into a joint stock company in August, Mr Cagliari, the representative of these politicians, was forced into a nominal chairman's role.

This marked the first stage in removing ENI from the direct political arena. Ever since the group was founded by Enrico Mattei in 1963 following significant gas discoveries in the Po Valley, it has played a high profile political role. The drive to establish independent sources of oil supplies gave Mattei powerful influence, particularly in foreign policy.

"I treat the political parties like taxis - I get on and off them when I feel like it," is an often quoted Mattei dictum. A power unto himself, he took ENI in a number of diverse directions including newspaper ownership (ENI still owns the daily Il Corriere). But he also made ENI's logo of the fire-breathing dog with six legs the symbol of Italy's post-war development and prosperity.

After Mattei's death in 1962, the politicians gradually reduced the group's independence. First it was the turn of the Christian Democrats, then the Socialists who in the late 1970s staked out ENI as their area of patronage.

Once Mr Craxi, the Socialist leader, became prime minister in 1983, he established a chain of officials to pull out of talks and press ahead with reforms in the teeth of Chinese threats to set up a shadow Hong Kong government before 1997 and to declare any changes null and void thereafter.

## Mandarin syndrome

Whether it was the Chinese or the British who blinked first in the tortuous business of arranging talks about the future of Hong Kong, the mandarins at the FCO made quite sure yesterday that Chris Patten could not claim too much of the credit.

The announcement coincided with a London news conference given by the governor of Hong Kong. But a telephone call to the FCO's well-staffed news department asking for the time and location of the event hit a brick wall.

Even though the event was taking place at the FCO a well-spoken young lady in the news department told callers that everyone was busy in an internal briefing. She could give no details of any encounter between Patten and the press. The media should call back later.

By the time the department's own meeting was over, so too was Patten's press conference. Perhaps, after all, the friends of Beijing still hold sway among the mandarins of King Charles Street.

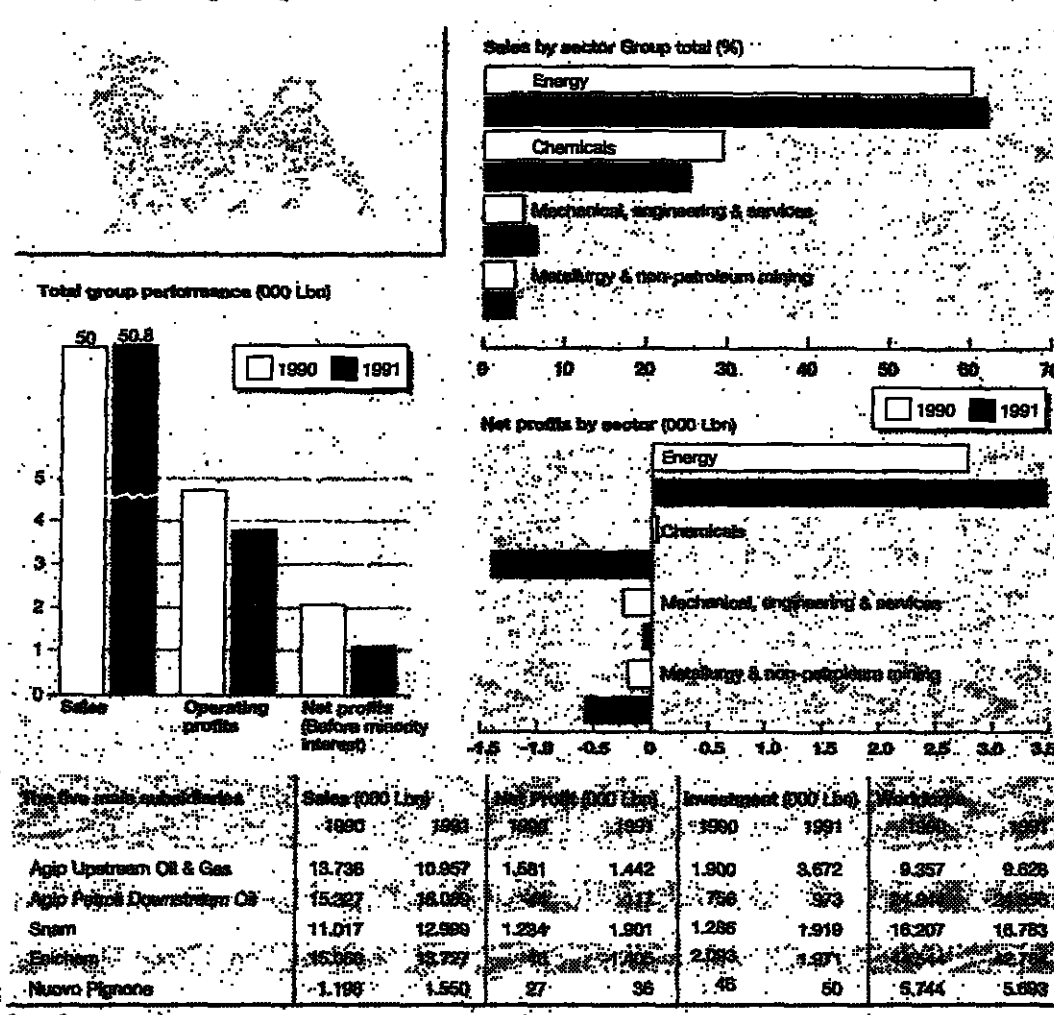
## Paws for thought

Remember Roland Rat, the cartoon character who came to the rescue of TV-am? So popular was the caddy rodent that he managed to boost the British

## An Italian empire strikes back

ENI, the state energy group, is restructuring and breaking political ties, say Robert Graham and Haig Simonian

## ENI: preparing for privatisation



state-controlled banks. ENI received favoured treatment. In return, the party received political funds. The confessions of ENI executives and consultants in the past two months point to the group being one of the most important sources of illicit finance to Italy's political parties during the 1980s.

Among the many accusations now being levelled by Milan magistrates against Mr Craxi is that during the late 1980s he allegedly received or was party to organising illicit funds of about £12bn from ENI, £8bn from Snam L&M from Agip, £3.5bn from Salim and L&M from Nuovo Pignone.

Milan magistrates are pursuing five main areas of investigation: ● the reorganisation of the petrochemicals and chemicals industry through Enimont, the joint venture set up in 1989 with Ferruzzi Montedison and bought by ENI in 1990; ● domestic contracts won by ENI subsidiaries, notably in the energy sector;

● kickbacks on foreign contracts won by Salim and Snam. These include pipelines in Nigeria and Iraq, and gas supplies from Algeria and the Soviet Union; ● the sale of \$7m paid in 1982 to the Socialists by disgraced banker Roberto Calvi in return for ENI lending money to Banco Ambrosiano, the private bank which collapsed in 1983 and had to be rescued by Italian financial institutions.

● funds generated by ENI offshore subsidiaries through false consultancy contracts, and through trading in oil contracts and currencies.

This is a big dossier with far-reaching implications. Take the Enimont affair. Magistrates are working on the assumption that

ENI was pressed by its political masters in the Socialist and Christian Democrat-dominated coalition to buy out Ferruzzi Montedison's 40 per cent stake in Enimont for an inflated price of £2,805bn. But they have so far failed to prove there was any political pay-off from the transactions and Ferruzzi denies any wrongdoing. Nevertheless, the cost of this purchase and the subsequent losses of the fertilisers sector have been one of the main factors restraining ENI's profits.

The state's investigations are also revealing the extent of the group's overseas operations in directing funds to the political establishment. According to the investigators, revenues were diverted through subsid-

## Investigations are revealing how the group's overseas operations directed funds to the political establishment

aries in offshore tax havens or Switzerland, frequently using former ENI executives and their cronies. Foreign subsidiaries also passed on the profits of speculative trading in oil and currencies.

ENI executives have admitted that "commissions" were frequently paid for overseas contracts. This was also confirmed in a recent interview by Mr Franco Reviglio, who was forced to resign as Italy's finance minister last month because of his alleged role in permitting ENI funds to be diverted to political parties while chairman of the group

between 1988 and 1989.

In an interview in La Repubblica, one of Italy's leading newspapers, he said: "Unfortunately this [granting of commissions] was something unavoidable if you wanted to deal with certain countries. ... Our main concern was to ensure that these bribes did not find their way back to Italy to finance people, movements and institutions."

In Italy the paying of "commissions" to secure a contract abroad is not an offence provided the company's books are not falsified. This grey area of legality has enabled the parties to obtain illicit funds by taking a cut on an inflated foreign "commissions". All of the 11 ENI executives involved in the corruption scandals are charged with falsifying accounts.

So far the magistrates appear to have decided to avoid embarrassing foreign governments - and prejudicing Italian contracts overseas - by not releasing the names of foreign nationals. But already the Algerian government has asked the Italian government for information about large gas sales contracts with ENI in the 1980s for which it fears bribes may have been paid.

In the wake of Mr Cagliari's resignation, Mr Bernabè set up a special working committee to examine management methods in ENI's overseas operations. By the beginning of June it will present proposals for tightening controls over the overseas activities of subsidiaries, especially those with purely financial functions. Already, 30 overseas companies have been closed.

In addition to cleansing its organisation, the group faces a difficult challenge in restoring its credibility and defining its future shape. "ENI

has become too big to keep track of with 209 subsidiaries overseas," says one executive.

Agip Petroli, the oil distribution arm, and the EniChem chemicals business have 60 companies based outside Italy; while another 30 are registered abroad by Agip. Bringing this far-flung empire to account is essential, says the company. The shake-up is already underway. Amsterdam-based ENI International Holding, which controls ENI International Bank, a financial institution registered in Nassau and operating out of Montecarlo, and which handles financial transactions exclusively for the group, has been one of the first targets. Last week, its 16-member board was removed and replaced by a 5-man team.

Mr Bernabè's efforts to reorganise the group will have a marked impact on ENI's financial performance. The results for 1992, as yet unpublished, will reflect the heavy cost of measures already taken to simplify the group's structure, purge loss-makers and sell off parts of the business. ENI officials concede that additional heavy provisions will be necessary.

About £500bn will be set aside in both the 1992 and 1993 accounts to cover redundancies at subsidiaries such as the group's heavily loss-making Sardinian lead and zinc mines. Job losses have already been felt in the higher echelons of the ENI organisation, with about 250 boardroom posts having been cut as a result of the closures so far. Heavy provisions will also be required to cover one-off write-downs in the value of fixed investments at some subsidiaries being closed or sold.

Together these provisions will depress earnings for the group, which made £1,051bn after tax in 1991. As a result, ENI is unlikely to meet the government's prediction in its "green book" on planned privatisations that pre-tax earnings for 1993 will be in line with those of the previous year. The need to set money aside to cover special provisions may even require some of the proceeds from privatisation to go to ENI, rather than directly to the Treasury, as envisaged by the government's privatisation plans.

Mr Bernabè has already managed to sell some of the group's non-core assets and hopes to raise further cash by floating other operations on the stock market. Last month, he announced the disposal of two parts of the Savio textile machinery division, raising about £150bn. The remaining units of the division will be sold by the end of this year. Plans to sell the profitable Agip Coal business, which has operations from Australia to South America, are well advanced. In all, 25 significant disposals are now under way.

Sales of group assets are open to foreign investors. So far, ENI will be the next stage of restructuring and refinancing the group - the flotation of its principal subsidiaries.

The process is expected to start with Agip, one of the most profitable parts of ENI. Details are not yet available, but analysts expect up to 20 per cent of the shares will be listed, raising about £2,000bn. If the Agip deal goes successfully, Snam may be next. "Taking the subsidiaries public is not just a way of raising money, but will also show bankers and potential investors we are serious about being judged by the market," says a member of the privatisation team.

The transactions will be the prelude to floating ENI itself. Listing the parent company will be much more complicated than taking the subsidiaries public. Merchant bankers have been working on the Agip and Snam flotations for over two years; it will take them at least as long to do valuations and prepare ENI's accounts for a share issue.

During this period ENI will continue its struggle towards a new identity. The cleansing process has begun and there is a sense of liberation within the group, a result of its increasing freedom from political control. But there is much dirty linen still to emerge, and the road to privatisation will not be easy.

## OBSERVER

breakfast channel's flagging ratings single-handed. Well, it sounds as if Spain's Partido Popular has a similar sounding secret weapon waiting to attack the ills of the Spanish economy. Should the PP win the elections, one of the favourites tipped for the finance minister's job is the party's spokesman on economic affairs - the well-connected Rodrigo Rato.

## Adding it up

No doubt it has something to do with the time of year, but a lot of accountants seem to be advertising their services in the latest issue of Ariel, the BBC's staff magazine. Surely it can't be a spin-off of the unfortunate publicity given to the director-general's John Birt Productions?

## Forgotten?

Jack Welch, the GE boss, doesn't like being reminded that the acquisition of the NBC TV network was hardly his company's most astute move. So his sudden appearance inside his TV fiefdom on Monday had a dramatic impact.

His avowed purpose was to introduce the new president of NBC News, Andrew Lack, poached from rival CBS. The appointment follows the embarrassing row over an NBC programme which involved a well known make of pick-up truck rigged to catch fire after it crashed.

The mighty Welch was in a forgiving mood as he addressed the staff of a network which has been stuck in third place and long rumoured to be up for sale. Everybody has lapses in judgment, said Welch, but that was now all in the past.

## Oceans apart

One of the world's odder bilateral relationships will get a thorough workout next month when Paul Keating, the Australian prime

minister, pays his first visit to Jim Bolger, his New Zealand counterpart.

Booming trade suggests that the relationship is working well. But there are plenty of tensions behind the scenes, in spite of the two countries' common heritage as English-speaking former British colonies. Australians have never forgiven New Zealanders for refusing to join their Bedfords federation in 1901, and many still don't understand why Kiwis don't want to have their affairs run from Canberra, 1,000 miles away across the Tasman Sea. Ministers who would not dream of insulting Papua New Guinea or Fiji often find it hard to be polite about their Kiwi cousins.

The problem was at its worst in the run-up to last month's Australian election, when Keating's Labor government did its best to paint conservative-run NZ as an economic basket case, ignoring growing signs of sustainable recovery. Senior Labor figures also lent their weight to dubious claims that Kiwi sheep shearers were cheating on their Australian income tax returns, and to largely unfounded criticism of the lifestyles of New Zealand immigrants.

Bolger, a taciturn North Island beef farmer, is not likely to upbraid Keating in public for his government's insensitivity. But he may feel free to point to another big difference - unlike the staunchly republican Keating, the vast majority of New Zealanders

remain firmly attached to the monarchy. He might also have some diplomatic tips for the Australians. European Community diplomats say the Kiwis' subtle approach has won them much better trade concessions than those obtained by the more aggressive Austrians.

## Made to measure

Would it not sound better if the Inland Revenue official dealing with capital allowances at Somerset House - N I C Perks - were to be transferred to the department of social security to handle queries about national insurance contributions?

## Short-changed

Regular readers of this column will be aware that good jokes are in short supply. So Observer has no hesitation in recycling the following quip from yesterday's Daily Mail.

Pub customer: "I'd like half a pint of your best bitter in a pint glass, topped up with a dash of Dom Perignon, three shots of Jack Daniels, two shots of vodka and a couple of cherries."

Without raising a well-trained eyebrow the barman mixed the drink and watched the concoction go down in one. "I shouldn't have had that with what I've got," gasped the customer. "And what have got sir?" asked the alarmed barman. "Thirty seven pence," replied the bouncer.



## UN makes urgent appeal for food as Bosnia aid runs low

By Robert Mautner in London and Laura Silber in Belgrade

THE United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs Sadako Ogata, yesterday appealed urgently to European Community countries for food aid for Bosnia, as officials warned the UN had practically run out of supplies to feed the country's stricken population.

"We have only enough for one day," Mr John Macmillan, UNHCR spokesman in Sarajevo, said. Other UNHCR officials in Geneva said an average of only three days' supplies were left in UN warehouses throughout former Yugoslavia.

Mr Douglas Hurd, UK foreign secretary, said in response to Mrs Ogata's appeal that Britain was pressing the European Commission to make available food

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■ Foes with shared values

already approved by member countries.

A UK official said his government was deeply concerned by the aid situation in Bosnia and was "disappointed" other EC countries had not matched a British £15m (£23m) emergency food aid contribution last month.

Mr Macmillan said the UN aid airlift to Sarajevo will resume tomorrow after a five-day suspension.

A UN relief convoy which reached the besieged east Bosnian town of Srebrenica yesterday evacuated 800 refugees, including 150 injured women and

children. UN officials confirmed 56 people had been killed on Monday by what they called an outrageous artillery attack on the town by the Serbs. Mr Macmillan claimed: "In their drive to acquire territory, the Serbs are willing to kill anybody to achieve their aims."

His remarks were aimed at, among others, the deputy commander of the Bosnian Serb army, Gen Milan Gvero, who has accused the Moslem defenders of Srebrenica of having improvised explosions to convince the UN that Serbs had shelled the town.

Mr Barry Frewer, spokesman for UN protection forces in former Yugoslavia, said the UNPROFOR commander, Gen Lars-Eric Wahlgren, had written to Mr Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb political leader, to express his revulsion at the attack.

Meanwhile the French government confirmed that it was recalling Gen Philippe Morillon, commander of the UN peacekeeping force in Bosnia.

Mr François Léotard, the defence minister, described the decision as routine and denied that the general was being punished for initiatives such as his recent mercy mission to Srebrenica.

Gen Morillon had sought to open the way to relief convoys and protect local Moslems from Serb attacks.

Reuter reports from Sarajevo: Masked Bosnian Croat militiamen with Nazi swastikas on their helmets seized four government food aid trucks at a checkpoint in central Bosnia. The trucks were returned after UN intervention. UN officials said yesterday.

## Thatcher condemns the west over policy towards Bosnia

By Ralph Atkins in London

BARONESS Thatcher, the former UK prime minister, last night launched a scathing attack on UK government policy towards Bosnia, accusing western countries of acting like "an accomplice to a massacre".

She also condemned Mr Douglas Hurd, UK foreign secretary, of using "terrible and disgraceful" phrases to justify not arming Bosnian Moslems. She was "ashamed" at the European Community's reluctance to intervene.

Her ferocious outburst provoked an angry reaction from ministers and looked set to fracture the fragile unity within the Conservative party over action against Bosnian Serb aggression.

Mr Malcolm Rifkind, UK defence secretary, accused her of "emotional nonsense" and said arms for Bosnian Moslems,

"would be used to prolong the war". If the west armed one side, Russia might decide to help the Serbs, he said.

Most Tory MPs have so far been reluctant to see British troops further involved in the conflict - and Mr John Major, prime minister, has won a consensus within the party for a policy based on providing humanitarian aid and urging a negotiated peace settlement.

But Baroness Thatcher's emotional calls last night for a far tougher stance could act as a rallying call for ruling Conservative MPs who have been horrified at recent atrocities including Monday's killing of at least 56 people in a Serb artillery attack on the east Bosnian town of Srebrenica.

Tensions could erupt when Parliament returns today. The opposition Labour party is pressing for a statement on Bosnia.

Speaking on BBC television, Baroness Thatcher said: "We can't go on with this policy namely feeding people but leaving them to be massacred." United Nations' resolutions should be overturned, she said, so the Bosnian Moslems could arm themselves: "Everyone has a right to self defence - that is far older than the UN's charter."

Mr Hurd, who was last night travelling to Japan, has previously said such a policy would lead to "level killing fields".

But Baroness Thatcher responded: "I thought it was a terrible and disgraceful phrase. There is a killing field now where the innocent haven't the requisite arms properly to defend themselves."

The bitter conflict, "is in Europe's sphere of influence, it should be within Europe's sphere of conscience," Baroness Thatcher said.

## European banks may agree on closer links

By Robert Peston, Banking Editor in London

NATIONAL Westminster, the UK's second largest bank, is in talks with Société Générale of France and Commerzbank of Germany about co-operating on providing improved services to small businesses and personal customers.

The bank said yesterday it was exploring two possible joint initiatives.

● Linking the payment systems of the three banks, so that all customers can make cheaper transfers of funds between France, Germany and the UK. ● Allowing the three banks' medium-size corporate customers to have access to the full range of services provided by the banks.

"Talks are at a very preliminary stage," NatWest said. He said no decision had been taken on whether the banks' computer systems for funds transfers should be connected or if any linkage should be "less formal".

However, plans to combine the banks' services for medium-size companies are better developed. NatWest said the intention was that any medium-size corporate customer of the UK bank should be able to use the services of Commerzbank in Germany or Société Générale in France, if that customer is planning to do business in those countries.

Many businesses complain about the difficulty and expense of obtaining banking services on the continent.

To date, bank initiatives to take advantage of the single European Community market in financial services - which was created at the beginning of this year - have been modest.

The NatWest proposal conforms with a general banking trend. Banks have been reluctant to acquire branches in large numbers of European countries. Their preference has been to co-operate on specific projects with other European banks.

Last year, Royal Bank of Scotland launched an electronic system, IBOS, linking branches with Credit Commercial de France, Spain's Banco Santander and Banco de Comercio e Industria in Portugal.

Boston Five acquisition, Page 19  
Bank sells Dorian stake, Page 20

## France cuts interest rate

Continued from Page 1

major move will come after action from the Bundesbank."

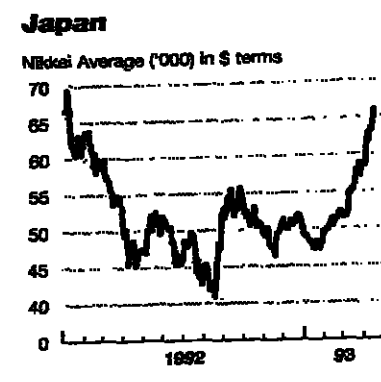
Yesterday's cut was welcome news for France's banks, which have faced steep increases in borrowing costs because of the gap between market rates and their own base rates. The French Banking Association has estimated the cost to the industry at up to FF1bn (£183m) a day.

The banks are expected to try to recoup their losses before reducing base rates.

## THE LEX COLUMN

## Japan's jump start

FT-SE index: 2848.0 (+25.2)



input prices since September will be passed on, and of how quickly recovery will reignite inflation.

One risk is that domestic manufacturers will use recovery to catch up on the prices charged by foreign competitors. Another is that recovery will bring an end to discounting, pushing up retail prices as stores - rather than manufacturers - seek to claw back margins. The chances are, though, that such pressures will remain muted for the time being.

Recovery initially brings productivity gains as idle capacity is brought back on stream. At this stage the impact of higher demand is thus normally to dampen rather than kindle inflation. That should continue to offset the higher input prices for some time, especially since the UK is also enjoying a sharp fall in unit labour costs. The more dangerous moment will come when pay settlements start to rise again. Despite the apparent increase in union militancy, there is little sign of that yet. Wage levels should be watched, just the same.

## UK economy

The devaluation effect on UK manufacturers' costs abated in March. Not only did input prices rise only 0.1 per cent on February's level; the main influences were a sharp rise in home-grown food manufacturing materials and a drop in the price of electricity to large industrial users. With the prices of imported materials falling and sterling on a recovery track, it looks as though a line can be drawn under the debate on the price effect of devaluation. That still leaves the questions of how far the 10 per cent rise in

## ICI

The 20 per cent target return on capital set by Mr Ronnie Hampel, heir to ICI's chemicals side, is less stringent than it sounds. A five year payback on new investment is close to being an industry standard. On a mixed bag of new and fully depreciated plant, return on capital is difficult to measure. Since ICI is shy about the distribution of capital across the group, the market will hardly be in a position to judge whether the target has been met. Mr Hampel could pin his colours firmly to the mast by setting a target rate of return on sales.

If the target is applied honestly, though, ICI will be in for radical reshaping. The chemicals side returned 3.7 per cent on net assets last year, based on operating profits of £146m before exceptional gains and shareholders' funds of £4bn. That is some way from Mr Hampel's minimum rate of return of 10 per cent in the trough, even allowing for restructuring benefits to come. One answer may be for ICI to steer away from capital-intensive industries. But that decision is by no means clear cut. Toxide has delivered an average return on net assets of 27 per cent over 20 years - a performance flattered by years of low investment, which depressed the asset base and reduced depreciation.

Short of cash-generative pharmaceuticals, cash flow may be a bigger constraint. Paying an uncovered, uncited dividend will cost ICI £200m this year. The latest round of restructuring carries a cash cost of £250m over three years, on top of residual costs from earlier slimming. Industries such as petrochemicals which feature big capital projects may seem too risky whatever the rate of return.

## Queens Moat

What does Queens Moat Houses have in common with British Steel, the best performing stock in the FT-SE 100 during the first quarter of this year? Both have been bought by US investors attracted by a share price at steep discount to stated net asset value. Such a yardstick is popular in the US, where earnings trends are volatile. At its suspension price of 47p Queens Moat looks cheap compared with last stated assets per share of 114p. Yesterday's British Steel closing price of 86p was less than half the company's net assets of 194p per share.

The Queens Moat discount has been overtaken by events, however, while there must be room for debate about the real worth of British Steel's assets at a time of structural overcapacity in the European industry. Perhaps price to net assets is a better yardstick in the US because balance sheet accounting is there more disciplined. More likely it is flawed because it takes no account of the quality of management or its ability to generate profits from the assets under control. Either way, the measure looks an inadequate substitute for the price-earnings ratio which has been devalued by the new UK accounting standards.

## Sharp decline in retail sales casts doubt on US recovery

By George Graham in Washington

A PLUNGE in US retail sales last month has revived pessimism about the strength of the country's economic recovery and sharpened President Bill Clinton's arguments in favour of the \$16bn spending stimulus he has so far been unable to push through Congress.

The Commerce Department said retail sales dropped by 1 per cent in March and revised its earlier estimates of February sales to a fall of 0.3 per cent, instead of the 0.3 per cent rise it had originally announced.

The figures added to pressure on the dollar on the foreign exchange markets. In London, the US currency lost ground across the board, dropping to DM1.5790 from DM1.607 before the Easter break on Thursday.

Some of last month's fall in sales could be attributed to the effects of heavy snowstorms along much of the east coast,

which depressed sales of building materials, clothing and petrol. But Mr Ron Brown, the commerce secretary, said the two consecutive months of decline provided "compelling evidence that recovery is at risk unless decisive action is taken when Congress returns next week".

All sectors except drugstores showed a decline in sales, with furniture stores down 2.3 per cent and department stores down 2.5 per cent.

March sales still stood 4.4 per cent higher than a year ago at an estimated \$166.9bn, but economists said recent surveys of consumer confidence, such as the widely watched Conference Board indicator, have shown a much grimmer outlook for consumer spending after a brief surge in the wake of Mr Clinton's election last November.

The stimulus bill, which the Clinton administration claims will create 500,000 jobs, has been blocked in the Senate by a united Republican opposition, which has

denied the administration the three-fifths majority it needs to debate and force a vote.

Mr Clinton has embarked on a campaign of harsh public criticism of the Republicans - on Monday, pointing to 25,000 children taking part in an Easter egg race on the White House lawn, he suggested that the young were suffering because of the delay. He further irritated Senator Robert Dole, the Republican leader, by accusing senators of romping in their private swimming pool on Capitol Hill while denying funds for pools in inner cities, which are among the projects the bill might pay for.

The administration has also launched a less abrasive drive to win support from groups who might apply pressure to the Republican senators, including Republican mayors, several of whom have backed the spending plan.

Currencies, Section II  
World stocks, Section II

## Hopes high for UK recovery

By Emma Tucker, Economics Staff, in London

HOPES OF a recovery in the UK economy gathered pace yesterday with the publication of a survey showing British companies predicting flourishing sales and new orders.

Dun & Bradstreet, the business information company, reports that six out of 10 businesses expect sales to increase in the second quarter of the year, against only two out of 10 expecting them to fall.

The findings are significantly more optimistic than in the previous quarter and will add to a growing impression that the economy has reached a turning point.

The increase in business confi-

dence was underlined yesterday by the sharpest rise in domestic air travel for a year, indicating greater confidence among UK companies which buy most of the tickets for internal flights.

The latest traffic figures from BAA, which operates London's airports and three in Scotland, show a 5.5 per cent increase in domestic passenger traffic in March compared with the same month a year ago. Heathrow airport showed the highest gain in the south with a 8.3 per cent year-on-year rise in total passengers to 3.8m last month.

Traffic from BAA airports to the rest of Europe increased more quickly than domestic traffic, rising 9.6 per cent over March 1992. BAA's airports together handled 6.1m passengers in

March, a rise of 6.2 per cent on last year.

On the foreign exchanges, meanwhile, the pound was stronger against the D-Mark, closing 14 pence higher at DM2.4625. Share prices were also more buoyant. The FT-SE 100 index of leading shares rose 25 to 2,946.8.

House prices have perked up recently, while car registrations for the first quarter of the year rose sharply compared with the same quarter a year ago.

Dun & Bradstreet, which interviewed just under 2,000 managing directors between March 17 and 31, reported expectations about employment have improved. More companies nationwide plan to hire staff than to fire them.

Estate agents bullish, Page 9

World Weather		°C		°F		°C		°F		°C		°F		°C		°F			
		°C	°F			°C	°F			°C	°F			°C	°F				
Abuja	F	17	63	Abuja	F	17	63	Abuja	F	17	63	Abuja	F	17	63	Abuja	F	17	63
Algeria	F	17	63	Algeria	F	17	63	Algeria	F	17	63	Algeria	F	17	63	Algeria	F	17	63
Amsterdam	S	12	54	Amsterdam	S	12	54	Amsterdam	S	12	54	Amsterdam	S	12	54	Amsterdam	S	12	54
Atlanta	S	18	64	Atlanta	S	18	64	Atlanta	S	18	64	Atlanta	S	18	64	Atlanta	S	18	64
Bangkok	S	27	80	Bangkok	S	27	80	Bangkok	S	27	80	Bangkok	S	27	80	Bangkok	S	27	80
Bombay	S	27	80	Bombay	S	27	80	Bombay	S	27	80	Bombay	S	27	80	Bombay	S	27	80
Buenos Aires	S	18	64	Buenos Aires	S	18	64	Buenos Aires	S	18	64	Buenos Aires	S	18	64	Buenos Aires	S	18	64
Calcutta	S	27	80	Calcutta	S	27	80	Calcutta	S	27	80	Calcutta	S	27	80	Calcutta	S	27	80
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India	S	27	80	India	S	27	80	India	S	27	80	India	S	27	80	India	S	27	80
Indonesia	S	27	80	Indonesia	S	27	80	Indonesia	S	27	80	Indonesia	S	27	80	Indonesia	S	27	80
Japan	S	12	54	Japan	S	12	54	Japan	S	12	54	Japan	S	12	54	Japan	S	12	54
London	S	12	54	London	S	12	54	London	S	12	54	London	S	12	54	London	S	12	54
Los Angeles	S	12	54	Los Angeles	S	12	54	Los Angeles	S	12	54	Los Angeles	S	12	54	Los Angeles	S	12	54
Madrid	S	12	54	Madrid	S	12	54	Madrid	S	12	54	Madrid	S	12	54	Madrid	S	12	54
Manila	S	27	80	Manila	S	27	80	Manila	S	27	80	Manila	S	27	80	Manila	S	27	80
Mexico City	S	27	80	Mexico City	S	27	80	Mexico City	S	27	80	Mexico City	S	27	80	Mexico City	S	27	80
Moscow	S	12	54	Moscow	S	12	54	Moscow	S	12	54	Moscow	S	12	54	Moscow	S	12	54
Mumbai	S	27	80	Mumbai	S	27	80	Mumbai	S	27	80	Mumbai	S	27	80	Mumbai	S	27	80
Nairobi	S	27	80	Nairobi	S	27	80	Nairobi	S	27	80	Nairobi	S	27	80	Nairobi	S	27	80
Paris	S	12	54	Paris	S	12	54	Paris	S	12	54	Paris	S	12	54	Paris	S	12	54
Perth	S	12	54	Perth	S	12	54	Perth	S	12	54	Perth	S	12	54	Perth	S	12	54
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Rome	S	12	54	Rome	S	12	54	Rome	S	12	54	Rome	S	12	54	Rome	S	12	54
Singapore	S	27	80	Singapore	S	27	80	Singapore	S	27	80	Singapore	S	27	80	Singapore	S	27	80
Sydney	S	12	54	Sydney	S	12	54	Sydney	S	12	54	Sydney	S	12	54	Sydney	S	12	54



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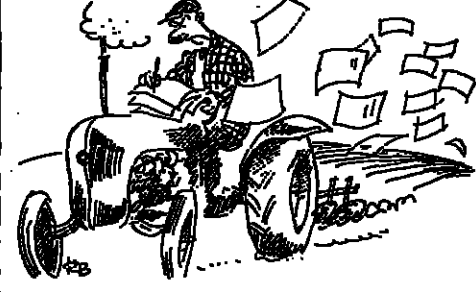
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**INSIDE**

**Telegraph's deal for Southam approved**

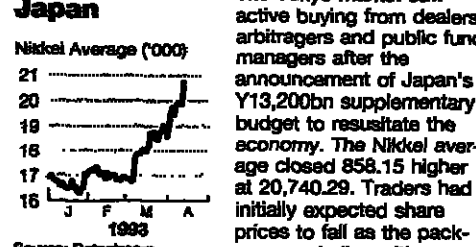
Shareholders at an EGM of newspaper group The Telegraph took just five minutes to approve a deal in which the group - 68 per cent owned by Mr Conrad Black's Hollinger - will buy half Hollinger's stake in Southam, the Canadian newspaper group, for £72.3m (\$112.7m). Page 25

**Farmers snowed under**



UK farmers have been sent "Domes Day" forms, containing 18 columns of questions which farmers must answer giving every detail about every field under their control. If the forms are not completed correctly, then farmers who grow cereals and produce beef will not be eligible for certain payments. Page 28

**Budget package lifts Japan**



The Tokyo market saw active buying from dealers, arbitrageurs and public fund managers after the announcement of Japan's ¥13,200bn supplementary budget to resuscitate the economy. The Nikkei average closed 858.15 higher at 20,740.29. Traders had initially expected share prices to fall as the package was in line with expectations. However, hopes of a sustained bullish trend prevailed. Back Page

**Explosions at mining group**

A boardroom battle at Placer Dome, Canada's biggest gold mining group, has kept the Canadian financial community enthralled for months. The turmoil started in February last year when the group announced writedowns totalling C\$225m (US\$260m) after tax and resulted in the departure of a handful of long-serving directors. Page 21

**Fading hope for PPI creditors**

Creditors of Poly Pack International should say goodbye to any hope of cash remittances from Meyne, the company's Turkish firm and packaging subsidiary. An "information memorandum" to prospective buyers reveals that the company is turning over barely a fifth of the sales reported in PPI's consolidated accounts in London, before the group went into administration in October 1990, owing banks and other creditors £1.13bn (\$1.76bn). Page 26

**VNU to sell print division**

VNU, the largest publishing group in the Netherlands, is to sell its printing division to De Boer Bookshoven, a Dutch printing group, in a cash and paper deal that will leave it with a 30 per cent stake in the new printing company. Page 20

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**Chief price changes yesterday**

FRANKFURT (DEM)			PARIS (FF)		
Alto	630	+ 15	Alto	628	+ 14
Banker	345	+ 10	Banker	423	+ 10
Deutsche	12		Deutsche	842	+ 6
Deutsche	48	+ 10	Paribas	424.8	+ 8
Deutsche			UAP	583	+ 20
Falke	540	+ 5	Falke		
Paris	125	+ 5	Paro BSG	503	+ 22
NEW YORK (\$)			TOKYO (Yen)		
Deutsche	2265	+ 65	Deutsche Bank	1070	+ 109
Deutsche	285	+ 14	Deutsche Bank	1190	+ 130
Deutsche	704	+ 14	Deutsche Bank	728	+ 100
Deutsche	734	+ 14	Deutsche Bank	650	+ 10
Deutsche	274	+ 14	Deutsche Bank	1220	+ 70
Deutsche	504	+ 14	Deutsche Bank	481	+ 14

New York prices at 12.30.

New York prices at 12.30.

LONDON (pence)			MANCHESTER (pence)			GLASGOW (pence)			EDINBURGH (pence)		
Alfred Leisure	49	+ 5	Maxwell Swain	451	+ 14						
BAA	793	+ 10	Pearle	625	+ 50						
BSA	503	+ 10									
Cable & Wire	747	+ 17	English Water	538	- 8						
Cupid	36	+ 5	Erbi	37	- 5						
HSBC	623	+ 13	Euro Disney	1068	- 16						
HTV	494	+ 94	Glen	553	- 19						
Higgs & Hill	73	+ 8	Morgan Crucible	282	- 9						
Homeguide	60	+ 8									
Kewell Systems	161	+ 23	Waste								
Lloyds Bank	545	+ 11	Management	514	- 35						

**Merrill shares up on sharp profits rise**

By Patrick Harrington in New York

SHARES in Merrill Lynch, the largest securities house in the US, rose sharply yesterday after the company reported record first quarter profits of \$542m, up 87 per cent from a year earlier. The results included a one-off pre-tax lease charge of \$103m for offering vacated office space to other companies at the Merrill's World Financial Center headquarters in Manhattan.

Merrill's strong performance delighted investors, who bid up the company's stock 3% to \$75 1/2 on the New York Stock Exchange.

There were new revenue records in Merrill's four main business lines - commissions, principal transactions, investment banking and asset management and custodial fees.

This was an indication that the Wall Street earnings juggernaut, powered for the past two years by low domestic interest rates

and huge demand from individual investors and corporations for securities broking and underwriting services, is not slowing down.

Total revenues at Merrill reached a quarterly record of \$3.96bn.

The biggest chunk came from principal transactions, the business of trading securities both for clients and for the company, which earned \$755m.

Merrill said "heightened client activity" contributed to higher

revenues from its trading of swaps and other derivatives, and corporate and municipal bonds.

Commission revenues rose 4 per cent to \$714m, surpassing the previous record set in the first quarter of 1987. Investment banking revenues were also strong, up 23 per cent at \$455m, as Merrill once again topped the debt and equity underwriting tables in US and global capital markets.

Fees from asset management and custodial services rose 7 per cent to \$236m, buoyed by a 12 per

cent increase in client assets under management to \$145bn.

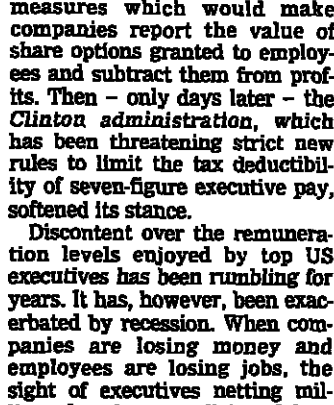
Higher levels of interest earning assets, and favourable interest rates spreads, meanwhile, lifted net interest and dividend profit 29 per cent to \$266m. Credit upgrades from ratings agencies, which lowered Merrill's funding costs, also helped boost the bottom line.

On the costs side, non-interest expenses rose 10 per cent to \$1.923m, excluding the one-off lease charge.

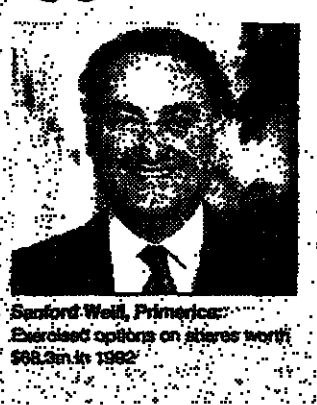
**US executives face growing pressure on their pay-packets. Karen Zagor reports**

**The price of the boss's options**

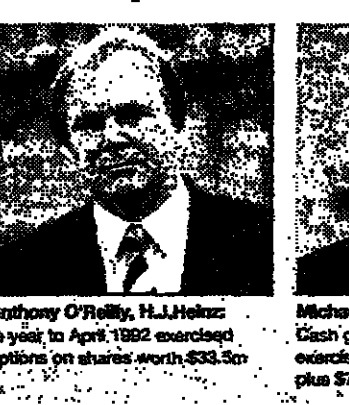
**Big gainers from stock options**



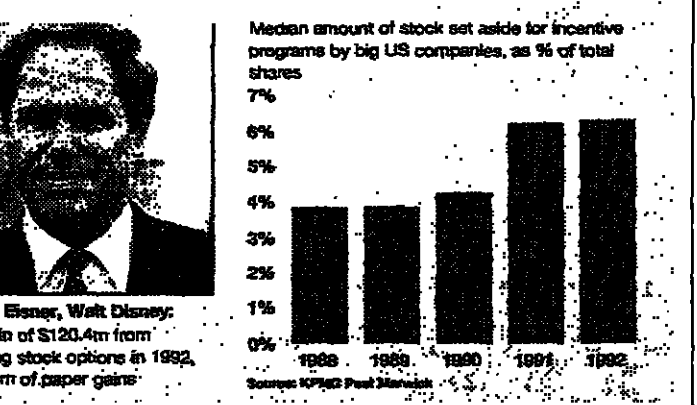
Sanford Weill, Citicorp Chairman. Exercised options on shares worth \$66.5m in 1992.



Anthony O'Reilly, H.J. Heinz Chairman. In 1992 exercised options on shares worth \$33.5m.



Michael Eisner, Walt Disney Chairman. Cash gain of \$120.4m from exercising stock options in 1992, plus \$70m of paper gains.



already showing a paper profit of more than \$70m although all the options cannot be exercised at this stage.

Nor can share options always be justified as a long-term management incentive. In the pharmaceuticals sector, Merck's Mr Roy Vagelos was granted options on shares worth \$25.6m at last year's exercise price. Mr Vagelos will retire at the end of 1994.

Because stock options do not involve a cash outlay, they are not listed among a company's expenses. However, when employees cash in their options at a profit, companies are allowed to deduct this surplus from their income for tax purposes.

What FASB is proposing is a three-year interim period, during which companies must come to grips with techniques for estimating "fair value" of employee options and prepare for the new accounting requirement. During this period grants of stock options would appear in the footnotes of financial statements.

From 1997 however, options will be recognised as expenses on the day they are granted and charged against profits - although the expense would be stretched over the vesting period for the options. Quite how the "fair value" of the options would

be calculated is debatable. "It's not all that complicated for companies to do," said the board.

"All we've stated is that companies should use an option-pricing model, like the Black-Scholes model. These models are used now by option traders and others, and take into account interest rates, stock price today and volatility to produce a value for the options."

Corporate America, which had hoped the board would limit its interference to more stringent disclosure standards without a charge against profits, has so far been muted in its criticism. But the board can expect a chorus of corporate disapproval during a six-month comment period which will follow publication in June of its formal exposure draft.

Ironically, the board's attempt to introduce flexibility for companies may trigger the loudest denunciation. It seems unlikely that the board will hold companies to any specific pricing model, and there have already been complaints about the confusion this will create.

There is also no consensus on the degree to which the plans - if implemented as outlined - would deplete reported profits. Estimates range from as little as 2 per cent to as much as 10 per cent. It is certain that that some companies will change the way they reward employees. Critics of the plan argue that it will hit smaller and newer companies hardest, and that middle management will suffer more than top management if companies cut back on stock options.

The VentureOne survey gives weight to some of these charges. While only 10 per cent of respondents said they would eliminate options altogether, 88 per cent they would reduce the number of employees receiving options. Furthermore, nearly half said options would be offered to key executives only. By contrast, some bigger companies, such as Merck and Pepsi, say they hope to retain their stock option programs.

Just as US corporations were starting to grapple with the board's proposals, however, they were offered some consolation by the US Treasury.

Earlier this year the Clinton administration had suggested that companies should only be able to deduct salaries in excess of \$1m when calculating taxable profits. If the pay was linked to the company's performance, however, more detailed proposals

put forward by the Treasury suggest that performance-linked pay would include not only commissions or other earnings based directly on an executive's percentage of sales, but also any compensation package based on performance standards approved by the company's shareholders.

Moreover, the ban on deductibility would affect only the chief executive and the four other highest paid executives in a company. Compensation plans already in place before the measure was outlined on February 17 would also be exempt.

Some senior Wall Street executives welcomed the more relaxed stance on deductibility of large pay awards. One expressed his relief: "Wall Street firms do spend a lot of money on people, so broad notions of a cap on the deductibility of compensation above \$1m would have used tax policy in a way that discouraged businesses which invest in human capital instead of plant and equipment. However, the present approach is much more in line with traditional tax policy... and the new proposals deal with the issue in a relatively rational way."

Additional reporting by Nikki Tait, Patrick Harrington and George Graham.

**Westinghouse Electric ends quarter with \$64m after-tax**

By Nikki Tait in New York

WESTINGHOUSE Electric, the US conglomerate which has encountered serious problems within its financial services division and a variety of management changes recently, yesterday posted \$64m profits after tax in the first quarter.

The figure compares with a net loss of \$246m in the same period of 1992, but this deficit largely reflected accounting-related charges.

Westinghouse said that first quarter profits and sales from continuing operations were flat year-on-year, at \$64m (\$65m) and \$1.96bn (\$1.85bn) respectively.

Coupled with last week's announcement on the commercial property loans, Westinghouse's acting chief executive, Mr Gary Clark, said that this left the company's restructuring plan

"ahead of schedule".

"We expect to remain ahead of plan throughout the year," he added.

However, Mr Clark added that any improvement in operating results would probably be concentrated in the second half of 1993.

During the first three months, "substantially" improved sales and profits figures from the power systems business and an advance on the broadcasting side were offset by declines in the electronics systems division, which primarily makes military equipment, and in the industrial division.

Westinghouse shares, however, which rose modestly on news of the property transaction, gained another 1% at \$15 1/2 yesterday morning.

**Royal Bank to buy Boston Five**

By Paul Taylor in London

THE Royal Bank of Scotland's fast growing US banking subsidiary, Citizens Financial, is paying \$36m in cash to acquire Boston Five Bancorp as part of its regional expansion strategy in New England.

The acquisition, which will be funded by Citizens without recourse to Royal Bank shareholders, represents a significant step towards the bank's goal of generating at least 10 per cent of its earnings from the US.

Mr George Mathewson, Royal Bank's group chief executive, said yesterday: "This acquisition is a further important step in our long term strategy in the US. We intend that Citizens should double in size in the next three years while becoming the leading community bank in southern New England."

When completed, the deal will make Citizens the sixth largest bank holding company in New England with \$6.4bn of assets. At the end of January, Boston Five had total assets of \$1.7bn.

Some 25 offices will be added to Citizens Bank of Massachusetts' 11 branches. Deposits will increase to \$2.1bn.

The deal will double the size of Citizens' mortgage banking subsidiary's portfolio to \$8bn and rank the Gulf States Mortgage company among the 60 largest in the country.

"Doubling the size of our mortgage servicing operation fits our goal of expanding our fee-generating business and our expansion into the Boston market fits with our strategic mission for growth," said Mr Fish yesterday.

In spite of the recession and a banking crisis in New England, Citizens has thrived in recent years and has helped restore some faith in British banks' US operations.

After enduring losses in the late 1980s, and debating how quickly they could sell, the mood among some British banks towards their US subsidiaries has changed considerably. As they struggle with bad debt at home, US operations have become an attractive source of income for some banks including the Royal Bank and National Westminster Bank of Scotland sale, Page 25

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FT007

## INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES AND FINANCE

## VNU sells print operations to focus on publishing

By Ronald van de Krol in Amsterdam

VNU, the largest publishing group in the Netherlands, is to sell its printing division to De Boer Boekhoven, a Dutch printing group, in a cash and paper deal that will leave it with a 30 per cent stake in the new printing company.

The transaction will create the largest printing group in the Netherlands, with annual turnover of FF1.2bn (\$665m). It will enable VNU to concentrate on its core publishing activities, in line with a strategy pursued successfully by Elsevier and Wolters-Kluwer, the Netherlands' other two dominant publishing groups, since the early 1990s.

VNU is to receive FF100m in cash, shares worth FF19m and 1.8m five-year warrants in De

Boer Boekhoven. It will provide the new printing group with a FF40m subordinated loan and a FF18m convertible bond. Last month, it took a FF80m charge on 1992, reflecting expectations that it would sell its printing division for less than book value.

Mr Joep Breijl, VNU's chairman, said VNU intended to hold its stake at around 30 per cent, which means that it may sell shares that it gains through the conversion of loans or exercise of warrants.

De Boer Boekhoven is only one-third the size of the printing activities that it will be acquiring from VNU. The FF100m in cash is to be provided by a banking consortium led by ABN AMRO, which owns 42 per cent of De Boer Boekhoven.

When VNU announced in

1990 that it planned to sell all or part of its printing activities, expectations were high that the company would find a foreign buyer. However, talks with other potential buyers had been upset by the currency turmoil in Europe in the autumn, which changed the outlook for export orders.

The new printing company, which has yet to be given a name, will benefit from the receipt of long-term printing contracts from VNU, the largest publisher of consumer magazines in both the Netherlands and Belgium.

Other customers are publishers of radio and television guides, as well as international magazines such as Time, Newsweek and The Economist, which have part of their international circulations printed in the Netherlands.

## Queens Moat calls in finance consultant

By Robert Peston, Banking Editor, in London

MR ANDREW COPPEL, the former finance director of jewellery group Bata, has been appointed as a consultant to Queens Moat Houses to mastermind the financial reconstruction of the troubled hotels group.

Mr Coppel said it was "not appropriate" to join Queens Moat's board until its financial position became clearer.

Mr Coppel, who left Bata in April 1990, before the group ran into financial difficulties, said one priority was to improve Queens Moat's management information systems.

Meanwhile, further details emerged of Queens Moat's financial condition. A preliminary estimate by Grant Thornton, the accountants shows that profits before interest and depreciation charges were £106m in 1992.

"That shows the group is viable", a banker said. The group's 64 bank creditors, which are owed £1bn, are hopeful that the eventual financial restructuring will not involve conversion of debt into equity, though it might require some deferral of interest and rescheduling of principal payments.

However, Grant Thornton believes Queens Moat made a pre-tax loss in the year of between £50m and £80m. The accountants have not fully quantified the effect on profits of Queens Moat's method of accounting for revenues derived from management incentive contracts. Under these contracts managers promised to earn specified revenues for the group during the forthcoming financial year but Queens Moat booked these revenues as profits for the previous financial year.

Last year, as the hotel industry went into recession, the managers delivered less profit than Queens Moat had booked.

Barclays, which is chairing a steering committee of the banks, has asked bank creditors to agree to a two-month standstill.

Lex, Page 18

## Suez confirms first loss in 135 years

By Alice Rawsthorn in Paris

SUEZ, one of France's most prominent industrial and financial holding companies, yesterday confirmed that last year it made the first loss in its 135-year history with a FF1.87bn (\$346m) deficit against net profits of FF3.94bn in 1991.

The group, which has a wide range of interests including the Indosuez bank and Victoire insurance group, has been the subject of takeover speculation since it disclosed its loss earlier this year.

Suez, like other French financial groups, has been badly affected by the impact of the economic slowdown, particularly in its property portfolio.

The Suez share price has also been hit by the controversy over a row with Union des Assurances de Paris, the French insurer which is one of its larger minority investors, over Suez's withdrawal from negotiations over the sale of Colonia, a Germany company controlled by Victoire.

Suez made an operating loss of FF610m last year, compared with an operating profit of FF570m in 1991. It also suffered a sharp fall in exceptional profits to FF1.65bn from FF2.16bn over the same period.

The group earlier warned that its property losses and provisions for 1992 would amount to FF4.2bn. In spite of the fall into the red it has

held its dividend at FF8.20.

Galeries Lafayette, the French retailing group, plans to sell a 49 per cent stake in Cofinoga, its credit and charge card business, to the Cetelem group.

The news of the proposed disposal comes shortly after the sale of the Cofinoga operation to the Cetelem group. Mr Jean-René Fourtou, chairman of state-controlled Rhône-Poulenc, repeated a forecast that the group's net earnings would rise in 1993, Reuter reports.

Mr Fourtou, whose company is seen as likely to head the list of privatisations expected from the new French government, said he hopes to generate \$6bn to \$8bn in sales from new products by the year 2000.

release specific profit figures when its full results are published later this month.

Cetelem has been involved with the Cofinoga operation since 1988, when it was set up. Cofinoga is a joint venture of Cofinoga and Cetelem.

Mr Jean-René Fourtou, chairman of state-controlled Rhône-Poulenc, repeated a forecast that the group's net earnings would rise in 1993, Reuter reports.

Mr Fourtou, whose company is seen as likely to head the list of privatisations expected from the new French government, said he hopes to generate \$6bn to \$8bn in sales from new products by the year 2000.

## Suchard invests in Turkish group

By John Murray Brown in Ankara

JACOBS SUCHARD, the Swiss confectionery group owned by Philip Morris, has purchased a 50 per cent share in one of Turkey's largest edible oils companies. The acquisition will allow the Swiss group to market its products in Turkey and the six Turkic-speaking republics of former Soviet central Asia.

The Swiss company paid an undisclosed sum for the stake in Marsa Margarine Sanayi, a

subsidiary of Sabanci Holding, Turkey's second-largest industrial group. This is Jacobs Suchard's first move into Turkey, and underlines growing foreign interest in the Turkish foods sector.

Marsa made sales of \$171m in 1992, and is market leader in edible oils, margarine and bottled spring water.

Jacobs Suchard by buying into an existing business, instead of green field investment, will obtain immediate market access, a distribution

network, a list of local brands, and a base to introduce its own well-known brands such as Toblerone, Suncard and Milka. The company said it planned to invest in manufacturing in Turkey in 1994.

In parallel moves, Unilever bought out the local Komifi vegetable oils group last year, in the first example of a foreign buyer paying goodwill for a Turkish brand. Corn Products, the US owner of the Koor brand name, bought out its local partner.

## Union International to slim down

By Roland Rudd in London

UNION International, the trading arm of the Vestey Group, is planning a series of new disposals as part of its strategy to develop into a smaller food processing and distribution group.

The company yesterday reported profit before tax and exceptional items of £30.8m (\$46.8m) in the year ended December 31, compared with a loss of £20.5m in the previous year.

An exceptional credit of £1.6m contrasted with the pre-

vious year's exceptional loss of £81.8m, which mainly arose from losses on disposals.

Net debt fell by 36 per cent to £202m, from £327m, through sales and reorganisation.

Mr Terry Robinson, chief executive, said the group was planning its future after the completion of the refinancing at the end of next year. "We want to rebuild our fortunes by disposing of our non-core activities and expand our core businesses."

Union International, one of the UK's largest private companies, is to focus on its food

processing and distribution business.

Mr Robinson said he expected net debt to be well below £100m by the end of the year.

Union is looking for an overseas investor to buy 30 per cent of Weddel New Zealand, with the remaining 20 per cent sold through a public flotation.

It plans to sell its international food processing and distribution businesses based in Brazil.

The group is close to finalising the sale of its Brazilian farming interests, which are expected to fetch around \$45m.

## Crédit Lyonnais to lift BFH stake

By Kerin Hope in Athens

CREDIT Lyonnais, the French state-controlled banking group, is to increase its holding in Banque Franco-Hellénique de Commerce International et Maritime (BFH), an Athens-based bank, to 75 per cent by acquiring a 25 per cent stake.

The French bank has agreed to buy the 25 per cent of BFH from the state-owned National Investment Bank for Industrial Development (Eteva) for an

undisclosed sum. Eteva will retain the remaining 25 per cent.

Under the terms of the agreement, BFH, with a net worth of about Dr1bn (\$32m), will be expected to seek a listing on the Athens stock exchange within the next three years.

Crédit Lyonnais has managed BFH since it was set up 12 years ago when Greece joined the European Community. In addition to trade financing, BFH has built up a

shipping portfolio and is expanding into private banking.

An investment bank controlled by National Bank of Greece, the country's largest state-owned bank, has been trying to dispose of its holding in BFH for some time.

Eteva plans to move into commercial banking, building a network of branches around Greece, as its development role has been curtailed by the government's privatisation policy.

## Morocco plans petrol station sale

## Morocco plans petrol station sale

THE Moroccan government is offering its 50 per cent stake in seven petrol station networks to domestic and foreign investors. Reuter reports from Rabat. It plans to sell off its stake in a total of 112 enterprises worth Dh36bn (\$4bn) by 1995, including distributors of petroleum products.

The seven networks are Mobil Oil, Shell, Total, Dragon-Gaz, Société Pétroles du Maghreb (Petrom), Société Marocaine de Stockage (SOMAS), and the Compagnie Marocaine des Hydrocarbures (CMH). They are capitalised at Dh360m.

Petrom shares worth Dh122.4m and CMH shares worth about Dh100m are among those on offer. Société Nationale des Produits Pétroliers (SNPP), the state agency, holds 51 and 50 per cent in the

two companies. Bids close on May 12.

"In 1992, domestic sales [of petroleum products] were between Dh12bn and Dh14bn, an increase of 12.6 per cent compared with 1991," the mines and energy ministry said.

The SNPP owns 50 per cent of the seven companies to be privatised and controls 75 per cent of the Moroccan petroleum distribution market. It was set up in the 1970s when the authorities launched a "Moroccanisation" programme to avoid multinational control of the distribution network.

"The government is preparing a large-scale return of multinationals to the strategic oil sector," the opposition daily Al Bayane said. However, officials deny foreigners will control the oil industry. Mr Moulay

Zine Zahidi, privatisation minister, said yesterday: "The state is responsible for crude oil imports and the SNPP and other companies distribute refined products only."

Officials said the state-owned oil refineries at Mohammedia, near Casablanca, and at Sidi Kacem, north-east of Rabat, were strategic enterprises and not for sale.

When the oil distribution companies have been sold, the SNPP will return to its status before "Moroccanisation" and will also be privatised.

SNPP, whose oil stock at the end of last year was worth an estimated Dh1bn, will probably take over gas distribution when the trans-Maghreb pipeline taking Algerian natural gas across Morocco to Europe is completed in 1995, analysts said.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

ROYALE VENDOME, a unit of Belgian holding company Groupe Bruxelles Lambert, and French insurer UAP have bought a further 2.38 per cent stake in Belgian insurer Groupe Royale Belge, a GBL spokesman said. Reuter reports from Brussels.

Securum, the first so-called bank set up by the Swedish state to take over non-performing assets of loss-making commercial banks, reported a loss after financial items of SKr1.67bn (\$220m) for 1992, agencies report.

The loss, in its first year of operation, included SKr561m in actual credit losses and provisions for a further SKr527m of expected losses.

Macintosh, the retail group, says it is negotiating to sell all its Spanish and Portuguese activities. Reuter reports from Maastricht.

An agreement on the sale would result in a book profit for Macintosh. But, given current interest rate levels, the effect on net profit after taxes of the sale would be about neutral, Macintosh said. The activities to be sold had 1992 sales of about FF1.26bn (\$145m), which is 23 per cent of Macintosh's total turnover in that year.

Barco, the Belgian electronics company, reporting 1992 net profit up sharply at BF553m (\$16.8m), said the outlook for this year remained satisfactory. Reuter reports from Brussels.

This announcement appears as a matter of record only.

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## ALCATEL ALSTHOM

At a meeting chaired by Pierre Suard on April 7, 1993, the Board of Directors of Alcatel Alsthom, the Paris based telecommunications, power and transport equipment group, approved the Group's audited financial statements for the year ending December 31, 1992.

**Alcatel Alsthom**  
1992 consolidated net income:  
increase of 14 % to FF 7.1 billion

Net income rose 14.1 % to FF 7,053 million from FF 6,180 million in 1991.

Earnings per share, based on a fully diluted number of 141.5 million shares, increased 4.3 % in 1992 to FF 53.2.

Income from operations amounted to FF 14,806 million, compared to FF 14,945 million in 1991, after taking into account additional financing charges connected with the purchase of ITT's remaining interest in Alcatel.

The Group generated a 1992 cash flow from operating activities of FF 15,360 million compared to FF 14,774 million in 1991.

Alcatel Alsthom's Parent Company net income amounted to FF 3,401 million against FF 2,723 million in 1991.

The Board expressed its satisfaction in view of the good performance achieved by the Group in a particularly difficult economic environment and decided to propose to the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders

## KEY FIGURES

FF million (except per share amounts)	1992	1991
<b>Consolidated Financial Highlights</b>		
Net sales	161,677	160,082
Income from operations	14,806	14,945
Net income	7,053	6,180
Fully diluted Earnings per Share (FF)	53.17	50.96
<b>Proposed Dividend</b>		
Total Dividends	1,964	1,629
Net Dividend per Share (FF)	14.50	13.50
Gross Dividend per Share, including tax credit (FF)	21.75	20.25

a dividend per share of FF 14.50 (FF 13.50 in 1991), corresponding to a total dividend per share of FF 21.75 (FF 20.25 in 1991), including tax credit. The dividend, payable from July 30, 1993, represents a total distribution of FF 1,964 million, a 20 % increase over the previous year. Shareholders, as in prior years, will have the option to receive the dividend in Alcatel Alsthom share form.

The Annual Shareholders' General Meeting will be held on June 24, 1993, at 2:30 p.m., at the "Palais des Congrès" in Paris.

At the General Shareholders' Meeting the Board will propose to renew the terms of office of Board members Guy Dejouany, Jean Marnignon, Cesare Romiti, and Pierre Suard, which have arrived at the expiration date, and to confirm the appointment of Jacques Ronze, in replacement of Jacques Friedmann, who has resigned.

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Shareholders are advised that the board of directors has decided to supplement the investment policy of The European Warrant Fund by authorising that in the case of investments in warrants or options on fixed interest instruments or on futures thereon as well as on fixed interest rate instruments or futures thereon.

Further the board of directors has decided that The European Warrant Fund should, in order to support the share price, make offers for its shares on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange. The offers by The European Warrant Fund shall be based on the present market price and it is expected that in the future both the spread between bid and offer prices for the shares in The European Warrant Fund on the market as well as the discount between the share price on the market and the net asset value will be reduced.

By order of the board of directors

L.V. Ingram

Chairman

مكتبة الناصر



## US stores blame poor weather for flat sales

By Nikki Tait  
In New York

THE severe winter storm that swept across the eastern US last month was blamed for the generally disappointing March retail sales figures reported by the largest US store groups last week.

K mart, which takes in a leading chain of discount stores and specialty retail operations, reported a 1.3 per cent fall in same-store sales last month, for example.

Wal-Mart Stores, the nation's top-selling retailer, managed only a 3 per cent gain, far below the double-digit increases that investors have come to expect from the Arkansas-based company.

Sears, Roebuck, another big retail group based in Chicago, also posted a fall - in this case of 1.4 per cent.

Some of the traditional department stores fared slightly better, however.

May Department Stores managed a 5 per cent increase in same-store sales; Neiman Marcus posted a 3.8 per cent gain; and Federated Department Stores, which owns Bloomingdale's and Abraham & Straus, reported a 2.5 per cent advance.

But among the specialty retailers, there were some pronounced declines: The Gap, the San Francisco-based fashion chain whose "star" reputation has become somewhat tarnished lately, reported a 6 per cent fall in same-store sales, for example.

Retailers admitted that the weather might not have been the only influence, with waning consumer confidence also a factor.

"Uncertainty about the outlook for the economy and the prospect of higher taxes is translating into lower levels of consumer confidence and a modest reduction in consumer activity," said Mr Allen Questrom, chairman of Federated.

"If these trends continue, they can be expected to have some impact on retail performance for the remainder of the year," he added.

## Dust settles after turmoil at Placer Dome

The mining group's new chief will focus on gold and copper, writes Kenneth Gooding

SARS are only just beginning to heal at Placer Dome, Canada's biggest gold mining group, after a boardroom battle that kept the Canadian financial community enthralled for months.

It resulted in the departure of several long-serving directors - including Mr Tony Petrina, formerly the president and chief executive, and Mr Peter Crossgrove, a vice-chairman who for some time seemed likely to succeed him.

There is also an injection of new blood. After a worldwide search, Mr John Willson has been recruited from a smaller gold company, Pegasus, to be chief executive.

The turmoil at Placer started in February last year when the group announced write-downs totalling C\$328m (US\$250.7m) after tax - including the entire C\$266m investment in the Mount Milligan copper-gold venture in British Columbia, acquired in 1990. This seems to have been a catalyst which brought simmering personal conflicts to the boil.

Analysts had warned of trouble ahead when Placer was formed in 1987 by a three-way merger between Placer Development, Dome Mines and Campbell Red Lake Mines.

The merger was welcomed as bringing together some of the best gold mining properties in North America and the South Pacific. Nevertheless, some wondered why Placer, a fast-growing, Vancouver-based group with mines in Australia and Papua New Guinea, would want to join with two rather conservatively-managed Toronto companies.

Placer, it seemed, believed it was a takeover target. Among those mentioned as potential

aggressors was Mr Bob Needham, who once headed Placer's Australian operations and is today advising the government of Papua New Guinea on minerals policies. Mr Needham and New Zealand entrepreneur Mr Bruce Judge were thought to be stalking Placer.

The friendly Canadian merger went ahead, but London brokers in particular raised doubts about the wisdom of running three such different companies simultaneously from Toronto and Vancouver.

Nevertheless, the new Placer group seemed to be coping even though, as Mr Crossgrove said recently, "it remained an unsettled mix of two diverse corporate cultures".

Then came the Mount Milligan write-downs, coupled with the news that C\$50m of the C\$106m carry-over value of Placer's investment in the Eskay Creek gold project in British Columbia, another interest acquired in 1990, would be written down.

Placer said a mine at Mount Milligan would produce a positive return but not enough to justify the C\$500m to C\$600m required to develop it.

At the Placer annual meeting, Mr Petrina told shareholders: "Let me be blunt. We should have taken more time to develop more information on which to make the decision [about Mount Milligan]. We relied too heavily on analysis that did not go far enough. It must not happen again."

The Placer board obviously felt the same way. Last May, Mr Crossgrove, 55, a board member and president of Ito Properties, was appointed to a new position of vice-chairman and sent from Toronto to Van-



John Willson: 'pragmatic, intelligent, internal debate'

couver, where Mr Petrina had his base, to head the company's mergers and acquisition activities. Placer said he would "complement the strengths of the president, Tony Petrina".

Instead, according to insiders, it led to a row about executive responsibility because Mr Crossgrove was to report directly to the board, not to Mr Petrina. This led to the resignation of Mr Petrina, seen by the investment community as a skilled mine operator, who had been 32 years with Placer and its predecessor. He announced on June 14 that he would step down in September, but would stay on the board.

Mr Crossgrove stepped in as acting chief executive and quickly gained a reputation as the man most likely to repair the group's reputation. He seemed to be a front-runner to

succeed Mr Petrina, or perhaps take over when the chairman, Mr Fraser Fell, 64, retired.

Mr Crossgrove was soon claiming there had been a change of culture at the company, a change that emphasised teamwork and shareholder value. He said he had redefined Placer's growth strategy and ended the private fiefdoms within the group that caused managers to work at cross-purposes. Growing in confidence, he criticised Mr Petrina's management style during a newspaper interview in a way that upset many other members of the Placer board.

"This left him at odds with so many people it was obvious it would be best for him to leave," one insider recalls.

So Placer turned to Mr Willson, a British-born, 52-year-old mining engineer, who in three years as president of Pegasus was credited with turning the low-cost gold producer into a stock market high-flyer.

He took over at Placer in January as chief executive of a group with interests in 17 gold mines in five countries, US\$500m of cash in the bank, virtually no debt, and a market value of more than US\$2bn.

Placer last year produced a record 2.3m troy ounces of gold and generated net profit of US\$11m on revenues of \$1.1bn. It reported that production costs had been cut by 17 per cent to \$186 an ounce, making it one of the lowest-cost producers among the big gold groups. In spite of the increase in gold output, Placer's reserves rose from 16.8m to 18.4m ounces.

The group also has a new non-executive chairman based in Toronto: Mr Robert Frank-

lin, 46, president of Signalta Capital Corporation and a director of Placer and, previously, Campbell Red Lake.

Analysts suggest the Placer board has been envious of the high market rating given by investors to its rival Canadian gold group, American Barrick Resources, and will want Mr Willson to ensure the share price is maximised.

This calls into question Placer's recent strategic move into base metals mining. How far should diversification go?

The most important step so far has been its purchase of half the Zaldívar copper deposit in Chile for \$100m (Outoquempo, the state-owned Finnish group, owns the rest). Placer will spend about \$400m over four years to develop the project, which is expected to have a life of 50 years. It is scheduled to produce about 200m lbs of copper annually at a cost of less than 50 cents a lb.

Mr Willson says Placer is engaged in a "pragmatic, intelligent, internal debate" to determine the group's approach to copper investment. "With gold prices drifting down we must be in a position to show good earnings from elsewhere. Copper and gold is fine. But spread the company's interests too widely and you are in danger of losing the high value the market puts on gold companies. If you want to be the best you must focus, concentrate, and devote most of your energies to your focus."

And what of the Mount Milligan project that proved such a catalyst for change at Placer? Mr Willson says: "The solution to Mount Milligan is higher copper and gold prices. It is getting low priority but we are still working on it."

## HK group in \$54m Chicago property deal

By Simon Davies  
in Hong Kong

HARBOUR Centre Development, the hotel investment arm of Hong Kong's Wharf (Holdings) group, has bought the City Place hotel and office tower in Chicago from the First National Bank of Chicago for US\$54m (\$HK419m).

The deal is Harbour Centre's

third US hotel investment since December 1991. It has also acquired the Inn on the Park in Houston and the Marriott Hotel in Dallas for a total of \$HK688m.

Mr Edward Cheng, Harbour Centre managing director, said: "It is our strategy to acquire key hotels in strategic cities in a depressed market with a view to longer-

term asset appreciation."

The company is estimated to have more than HK\$250m in net cash, following a rights issue last year, and will fund the acquisition from internal resources. Mr Cheng said the group was interested in further hotel purchases.

City Place is managed by Hyatt, but the purchase is conditional on the termination of

this contract. The management will then be taken over by Wharf's own Omni hotel management chain.

The Wharf group has taken a gamble on the of the US hotel market since the 1988 purchase of the Omni chain from Aer Lingus for US\$185m. The market has been depressed and Omni's US network of 40 hotels lost money last year.

## Profits at Nalco surge to Rs1.2bn

NATIONAL Aluminum Company (Nalco), India's largest aluminium producer, yesterday reported net profits more than doubled to Rs1.2bn (\$88m) in the 12 months to the end of March, from Rs580m the year before, Reuter reports from Bhubaneswar.

Turnover rose to Rs11.88bn from Rs9.74bn.

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FINANCIAL TIMES

NEWSLETTERS

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CREDIT LOCAL DE FRANCE

USD 100,000,000

FLOATING RATE NOTES

1990 / 1997

Noteholders are hereby informed that the rate applicable for the sixth period of interest has been fixed at 3.125%.

The coupon number 6 will be payable at the price of USD 100,000.00 on October 13th 1993.

This covers the period from April 13th 1993 until October 12th 1993 included, and represents 183 days of interest.

THE AGENT BANK AND PRINCIPAL PAYING AGENT

CREDIT LYONNAIS

Pernambuco Persepolis (Persepolis) P.T. Bank Negara Indonesia, Hong-Kong Branch

US\$ 151,500,000 - Floating Rate Notes due 1997

Interest Rate: 4.375%

Interest Period: from 14th April 1993 to 14th October 1993

Interest payable per US\$ 500,000 Notes = US\$ 11,119.79

by Fuji Bank (Luxembourg) S.A.

ENGELS - HOLLANDSE BELEGGENGS TRUST N.V.  
(English and Dutch Investment Trust)  
Established in Amsterdam

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders will be held on Thursday 29th April 1993 at 15.00 hours at the office of the Company, Keizersgracht 674, Amsterdam. Shareholders wishing to attend the General Meeting of the Company must deposit their shares not less than seven days before the Meeting with Hollandse Koopmansbank N.V., Keizersgracht 674, Amsterdam or with Hill Samuel Bank Limited, 45 Beech Street, London EC2P 2LX. A deposit certificate will be issued to such shareholders which, upon surrender, will entitle them to vote at the Meeting.

Holders of shares registered with the Company in its Shareholders' Register must inform the Board of Managing Directors in writing at least four days prior to the Meeting that they intend to attend the Meeting in person or by proxy.

Holders of Participation Certificates issued by Royal Exchange Assurance who wish to attend and vote at the Meeting must contact the Trustee Department of Royal Exchange Assurance, One Aldgate, London EC3N 1RE at least ten days before the Meeting.

Royal Exchange Assurance is prepared to issue a power of attorney for the same number of shares held in trust as the Certificateholders shall have deposited with Royal Exchange Assurance.

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1992 and of the Resolutions to be put before the Meeting will be available at the offices of the above named.

By order of the Board  
Hollandse Koopmansbank N.V.  
Management  
W. Michies  
Amsterdam  
14th April 1993

SARAKREK HOLDING N.V.  
Amsterdam

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders of Sarakrek Holding N.V. will be held on Thursday, 28th April 1993 at 11.00 am at the Pullman Hotel Schiphol, Oude Haagseweg 20, 1066 BW Amsterdam.

The agenda includes:

- 1992 Annual Report of the Board of Management
- Establishment of the 1992 Annual Accounts
- Determination of the profit appropriation for 1992
- Appointment to the Supervisory Board
- Authorization of the Board of Management to issue and to acquire - on behalf of the Company - shares in the company
- Miscellaneous

The complete agenda for this meeting and the 1992 Annual Report and Accounts are available and can be obtained at:

the Company's head office, Amstelplein 194, 1079 LK Amsterdam (P.O. Box 7266, 1007 ZS Amsterdam) and also at the ABN AMRO BANK N.V., Herengracht 567, Amsterdam.

To be able to attend the meeting, shareholders must deposit their shares at the office of the above-mentioned bank not later than 22nd April 1993. The deposit receipt will render evidence to the meeting.

The Board of Management

Amsterdam, 12th April 1993

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1992: Consolidated net profit up 11 %  
Another year of strong business and earnings growth for Crédit local de France

Consolidated net profit rose by 11 % to FRF 1,193 million, maintaining Crédit local de France's uninterrupted record of earnings growth.

Balance Sheet:

Growth in total assets

(in FRF billions)

Year	1990	1991	1992
Assets	213	265.1	320

Share performance: Crédit local de France's share price on the Paris Bourse increased by 68 % in 1992 and its trading volume made it a benchmark stock. At the end of the year, Crédit local de France had a market capitalisation of some FRF 14 billion.

Crédit local de France's performance since the beginning of the year has been in line with forecast. By 15 March, new loans totalling FRF 7.6 billion had been granted.

In view of these results, which reflect Crédit local de France's strength and momentum, at the Annual General Meeting on the 25 May 1993 Board will propose a 17.5 % increase in the total 1992 dividend, to FRF 14.10 per share.

Business results: Crédit local de France, France's principal lender in the municipal and regional development sector granted new loans totalling FRF 42 billion to regional and local authorities in 1992. Total loan commitments as at 31 December 1992 amounted to FRF 256 billion, including FRF 7.5 billion in international commitments.

Growth in loan commitments

(in FRF billions)

Year	1990	1991	1992
Loans	200	231	256

Funding: Crédit local de France raised FRF 38 billion in 1992, making it one of the leading French issuers on the international markets.

Its issues have been rated Aaa/AAA by Moody's and Standard & Poor's, in recognition of its strong financial position. Supported by shareholders' funds of FRF 15.9 billion as at 31 December 1992, its Cooke ratio is 20 %.

CRÉDIT LOCAL DE FRANCE

CAISSE D'ÉPARGNE

## INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES AND FINANCE

## Top ratings help CBS turnaround

By Karen Zagor in New York

CBS, which owns one of the three US television networks, yesterday posted a strong improvement in underlying first-quarter earnings, helped by a better business climate and the television network's ability to command higher advertising rates as it gains market share.

Net income in the first three months of 1993 was \$54.2m, or \$3.50, compared with a net loss of \$64m, or \$4.18, a year ago.

During the latest quarter, earnings benefited from a pre-tax gain of \$19.2m on the sale of some marketable securities.

A year ago, CBS took a non-cash post-tax charge of \$51.5m, or \$5.32, for the adoption of new accounting standards. The absence of the Olympic Games and the Super Bowl from CBS's winter programming resulted in a 19 per cent decline in sales in the quarter to \$878.9m from \$1.06bn. However, the sales gains from the 1993 special event sports broadcasts were largely offset by high rights fees and related production and promotion costs.

CBS television, which languished for many years as the third-rated US network, is starting to benefit from its relatively new-found place at the head of the ratings table.

Mr. Laurence Tisch, chairman and chief executive, said: "CBS has just begun to capitalise both on its status as the nation's top-rated television network and on its efforts to carefully contain costs."

During the 1993 quarter, the television network benefited from improved unit pricing and operating income in prime time and daytime entertainment and news.

"The network's earnings also benefited from a shift in its programming mix, airing more entertainment and news programmes and fewer special-

event sports programmes," said Mr. Tisch.

Advertising in New York and Los Angeles was weak in the 1993 quarter because of sluggish regional economies.

On Wall Street, shares in CBS climbed 86¢ to a 52-week high of \$23.65 before the close.

CBS recently agreed to remain headquartered in Manhattan after it was offered about \$37.5m in city and state tax incentives and \$12.2m in energy savings. In exchange, CBS has agreed to invest more than \$300m in building improvements, equipment and new technologies for broadcasting and production.

## Union Carbide sells fluids subsidiary

By Nikki Tait in New York

UNION Carbide, the large US chemicals group, announced yesterday that it was selling its Organosilicon subsidiary, which makes fluids and chemicals used in a wide range of industries, to a limited partnership run by Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenerette (DLJ).

The sale is valued at about \$300m. The consideration comprises \$220m in cash, plus \$80m of preferred stock - which is convertible into a 30 per cent voting interest in the silicones company.

Union Carbide, which will realise an unspecified after-tax gain on the deal, said that the transaction effectively concluded the asset sale programme which it announced in December 1991.

OSI had sales last year of around \$350m, and has facilities in Belgium, Brazil, Italy, Korea and Switzerland, as well as in the US.

The company employs around 1,100 people.

DLJ, a New York investment banking operation, is part of the large Equitable Insurance group, and the DLJ Merchant Banking Partners - which is making the acquisition - represents a \$1bn acquisition fund.

## Tenneco lifts earnings to \$74m despite lower sales

By Laurie Morse in Chicago

TENNECO, the Texas-based diversified industrial company, saw earnings jump in the first quarter, although revenues from all but its natural gas operations were lower than a year ago.

The group reported income from continuing operations at \$74m, or 48 cents per share, compared with \$35m, or 22 cents, in the first quarter of 1992.

Revenues were \$3.25bn, against last year's \$3.21bn.

The company's Case farm and construction equipment division trimmed its quarterly operating loss to \$17m, from last year's \$77m. In spite of the operating improvement, Case's

revenues fell 9 per cent to \$314m.

Tenneco said that North American sales of farm and construction equipment improved in the first quarter, but were offset by continuing declines in Europe.

The company's natural gas pipeline operations saw revenue in the quarter rise to \$918m from \$514m a year ago, while income from gas operations rose \$3m to \$121m, from \$118m last year.

Tenneco said the income gain was the result of higher pipeline volumes and the inclusion of results from Enbridge, a gas marketing company acquired in the fourth quarter of 1992.

During the first quarter, Case cut its worldwide produc-

tion by 19 per cent from the same period last year as part of its effort to control inventories and balance production with demand.

The Newport News Shipbuilding division recorded income of \$55m, up marginally from \$53m last year, in spite of a decline in sales to \$452m, from \$584m last time.

Tenneco's Albright and Wilson chemicals business had flat results in the quarter, with operating income at \$15m. Revenues in the division fell 7 per cent because of recessionary pressures from Europe.

Operating income at the company's Packaging Corporation of America fell to \$37m from \$49m, partly because the European recession weakened worldwide linerboard prices.

## FASB ruling forces banks, insurers to revalue bonds

THE US Financial Accounting Standards Board, by five votes to two, approved a rule that would force banks and insurers to value more of their bonds at market value, AP-DJ reports.

The rule, after some fine-tuning, is scheduled to be issued in early June and will be effective starting with 1994 financial statements, FASB officials said.

Banks and insurers have long opposed marking significant portions of their bond portfolios because they say it would make their results more volatile and confusing.

Sundstrand said that its tentative agreement to sell its commercial avionics business to Rockwell International for \$225m had fallen through, AP-DJ reports.

Sundstrand said it had "terminated negotiations" with Rockwell after the two companies had been unable to reach a mutually acceptable definitive agreement. It said it would pursue its options, including the sale of the 1,300-employee unit to other interested parties. The division makes flight data recorders and cockpit devices. Sundstrand had earlier said it expected to use proceeds from the sale to repurchase up to 4m, or 11 per cent, of its outstanding common shares.

## Coca-Cola chairman optimistic after strong term performance

By Nikki Tait

COCA-COLA, the Atlanta-based soft drinks group, yesterday unveiled a 21 per cent improvement in earnings per share during the first quarter of 1993, and an 18 per cent advance in profits, before accounting-related charges, to \$454m after tax.

Earnings per share advanced to 35 cents, compared with 29 cents. Sales in the three-month period were also up by around 10 per cent, at \$3.05bn.

Mr Roberto Goizueta, chairman, suggested the first-quarter results "support our

very bullish outlook for continued strong performance in the remainder of the year."

Coca-Cola shares - which, like others in the consumer products sector, have been hit by fears of brand erosion in response to the recent Philip Morris/Marlboro announcement of price cuts - rallied by 8¢ to \$39½ before the close.

The company said worldwide gallon shipments of soft drinks, concentrates and syrups increased by 6 per cent in the first quarter. International concentrate shipments were up by 7 per cent, while US shipments rose by 3 per cent.

Meanwhile, unit case volume rose by 4 per cent, with international volume up by 5 per cent and US volume up by 3 per cent.

At the operating level, the volume increases, coupled with margin improvement, led to an 18 per cent advance in profits, to \$677m.

The earnings-per-share advance also reflected a share repurchasing programme: Coca-Cola bought in 2.5m shares in the first quarter, and has bought in another 1m in the first eight days of the second quarter.

The company aims to acquire up to 100m shares between now and 2000.

## Boise Cascade cuts losses to \$12m as building products side improves

By Nikki Tait

BOISE Cascade, the Idaho-based paper, office and building products company, yesterday reported a reduced \$12.1m loss in the first three months of 1993.

By comparison, in the first quarter of 1992, Boise suffered a loss of \$43.3m before the cumulative effect of accounting-related charges.

Sales were slightly higher at \$944m, compared with \$953.9m in the same period of last year.

The company said the profits figure reflected continued weakness in the paper business, which was partially offset by a strong performance in the office and building products divisions.

In the paper division, Boise said losses were below those of the first quarter of 1992 but higher than the deficit recorded in the final quarter last year.

Prices of the company's mix of pulp and paper grades continued to decline on average in the latest three-month period, and reached the lowest level seen in the current industry cycle.

In the office products area, sales volume was flat year-on-year, but profitability improved due to reduced costs.

Profits from the building products division also climbed sharply due to an improvement in demand and a shrinking supply of harvestable timber in the Pacific north-west, which drove lumber and hardwood prices higher.

Boise shares were \$4½ higher at \$25½ before the close.

## Allegheny says sales set to reach two-year high

ALLEGHENY Ludlum, the US metals group, said 1993 first-quarter sales were expected to reach their highest level in two-and-a-half years and earnings to be up around 50 per cent over last year, Reuters reports.

Mr Robert Rozema, president, said the strong performance flowed primarily from increased sales, improved productivity and continued tight control of costs.

In the 1992 first quarter, Allegheny Ludlum recorded \$264.4m in sales and earnings of \$11.3m, or 34 cents a share.

## NY Times group back in black with \$10.9m for first quarter

By Karen Zagor

THE New York Times Company, which owns 31 regional newspapers and a 50 per cent stake in the International Herald Tribune, yesterday posted net income of \$10.9m, or 14 cents a share, on revenues of \$454.5m for the 1993 first quarter.

The company said a blizzard in March reduced pre-tax earnings by \$3.7m, or 2 cents.

A year earlier, the company suffered a net loss of \$20m, or 26 cents, on revenues of \$435.9m. The results were distorted by a charge of \$33.4m, or 43 cents, for accounting changes.

The 1992 figures also included a pre-tax gain of \$3.1m from the sale of assets and an operating loss of \$1.7m from a Georgia paper which closed in September.

The New York Times newspaper saw advertising lineage decline 4.8 per cent in the first three months of 1993, reflecting continuing weakness in the region's economy. Advertising lineage for the 31 regional newspapers increased 6.2 per cent in the period, reflecting a

rise in advertising inserts. Operating income for the whole newspaper division fell to \$38.6m from \$37.7m.

Excluding the impact of the March snowstorm and a 1992 gain from the sale of real estate, the group's operating profits rose to \$32.3m from \$31.2m.

The magazines division recorded operating profits of \$3.2m, compared with \$1.7m a year ago. Broadcasting and information services posted operating earnings of \$3.6m, against \$2.8m last year.

## Alcoa of Australia ahead by 26%

By Kevin Brown in Sydney

ALCOA of Australia, the aluminium and gold producer, yesterday announced a 26 per cent increase in net profit to \$890.5m (US\$57.4m) for the first quarter to the end of March, on turnover up 3.4 per cent to \$850.5m.

The group, which is jointly owned by Aluminum Company of America and Western Mining Corporation (WMC), the

Australian resources group, said it had benefited from a weaker Australian dollar and new refinery capacity at Wagerup.

It said the next instalment of capacity at Wagerup, which will increase capacity by 200,000 tonnes a year to 1.7m tonnes per annum, would be speeded up to come on stream in 1994.

The group declared a fully-franked dividend of A\$80m on

March 31, representing a return of 19.3 cents a share. It paid fully-franked dividends of A\$260m during 1992.

People's Jewellers, the Canadian retail chain in bankruptcy protection, cut its loss by more than half to C\$57.6m (US\$45.8m), or C\$4.72 a share, in the nine months to December 26, writes Robert Gibbens in Montreal. The chain operates 228 stores. Revenues dipped 9 per cent to C\$145m.

## TENDER NOTICE

## UK GOVERNMENT ECU TREASURY NOTES

For tender on 20 April 1993

1. The Bank of England announces the sale by tender on behalf of Her Majesty's Treasury of ECU 500 million nominal of UK Government ECU Treasury Notes. These will add to the ECU 500 million nominal of the same security sold at the tender on 2 February 1993. The tender will be held on a bid-yield basis on Tuesday, 20 April 1993.

2. The ECU 500 million of Notes to be sold by tender will be dated as of 9 February 1993 and will mature on 23 January 1996.

3. Notes will bear an annual coupon of 8% payable on 23 January in each year, starting on 23 January 1994. Payment for Notes allotted in the tender will be due on 27 April 1993; the amount payable will include 78 days accrued interest.

4. All tenders must be made on the printed application forms available on request from the Bank of England. Completed application forms must be lodged, by hand, at the Bank of England, Securities Office, Threadneedle Street, London not later than 10.30 a.m., London time, on 20 April 1993.

5. Each tender at each yield for each maturity must be made on a separate application form for a minimum of ECU 500,000 nominal. Tenders above this minimum must be in multiples of ECU 100,000 nominal.

6. Tenders must be made on a yield basis (calculated on the basis of a month of 30 days and a year of 360 days) rounded to two decimal places. Each application form must state the yield bid and the amount tendered for.

7. Notification will be despatched on the day of the tender to applicants whose tenders have been accepted in whole or in part. For applicants who have requested credit of Notes to their account with Euroclear or CEDEL, Notes will be credited (to the relevant systems against payment). For applicants who have requested definitive Notes, Notes will be available for collection at the Securities Office of the Bank of England after 1.30 p.m. on 27 April 1993 provided cleared funds have been credited to the Bank of England's ECU Treasury Notes Account No. 99046828 with Lloyd's Bank Plc, International Banking Division, PO Box 19, Hays Lane House, 1 Hays Lane, London SE1 2HA. Definitive Notes will be available in amounts of ECU 1,000, ECU 10,000, ECU 100,000, and ECU 1,000,000 nominal.

8. Her Majesty's Treasury reserve the right to reject any or part of any tender.

9. The arrangements for the tender are set out in more detail in the Information Memorandum on the UK Government ECU Treasury Note programme issued by the Bank of England on behalf of Her Majesty's Treasury on 9 January 1992. All tenders will be subject to the provisions of the Information Memorandum and to the provisions of this notice.

10. The tender Notes issued on 26 January 1993 stated that ECU 550 million nominal of Notes would be allotted directly to the Bank of England for the account of the Exchange Equalisation Account on 9 February 1993 and would be retained by the Bank of England with the intention that they would be sold in subsequent tenders. ECU 500 million nominal of these Notes are to be sold in the tender on 20 April 1993 and will constitute a further tranche of the Notes maturing on 23 January 1996, and will be fully fungible with the Notes issued on 9 February 1993. The remaining ECU 50 million nominal of the Notes will be retained by the Bank of England and may be made available for sale and repurchase operations with the market makers listed in the Information Memorandum.

11. Copies of the Information Memorandum may be obtained at the Bank of England. UK Government ECU Treasury Notes are issued under the National Loans Act 1968.

Bank of England  
13 April 1993

## CONTRACTS &amp; TENDERS



## RIYAD BANK SAUDI ARABIA

RIYAD BANK is Saudi Arabia's most prominent bank with 170 branches and offices in the UK and the USA.

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## RISK MANAGER

REF: RM1

Major technological changes are planned within the International Banking division, resulting in the most sophisticated and technically integrated systems being implemented. This is a key position for the Bank and will be reflected by a highly attractive tax-free salary and benefits package.

## RESPONSIBILITIES:

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- Identify new areas of Risk within specific product portfolios and business strategies within Treasury/International Banking.
- Analyse the new technical system providing Risk Management capabilities and subsequent development of user specifications for the system.
- Develop Risk Management processes and procedures.

## POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

- University degree, preferably in finance.
- Extensive experience of Capital Markets and Treasury products together with associated risk management.
- Experience of systematically controlling associated risks both at the front office and back office including setting up the system for counterparty, credit lines and position keeping for dealers operating in a real-time environment.
- Comprehensive knowledge of regulatory controls and trends within International Capital Markets/Treasury that impact Risk Management. This includes Credit Risk associated with derivative products, BIS guidelines and counterparty Risk weighting, netting arrangements and impact on counterparty credit lines.

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Interested candidates should direct CV's quoting reference number and including current compensation to the following address:

Box No A4776, Financial Times,  
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## COMPANY NOTICES



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£150,000,000

Floating Rate Notes Due 1997

In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Notes, the interest rate for the period 13th April, 1993 to 13th July, 1993 has been fixed at 8.500000% per annum. The interest payable on 13th July, 1993 against Coupon 11 will be £148.51 per £100,000 nominal.

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## BANCA COMMERCIALE ITALIANA

All Holders of Common Stock of Banca Commerciale Italiana (hereinafter, the "Bank") are invited to attend the Ordinary and Extraordinary General Meeting at 10 a.m. on April 27, 1993, in Milan, Piazza Belgioioso 1 and, if necessary, for a second meeting on May 7, 1993, at the same time and place, to consider and act upon the following

## Agenda

Extraordinary Business  
1) To consider a proposed amendment to Article 13 of the Articles of Association.

Ordinary Business  
2) To receive the Directors' and Internal Auditors' Report and Accounts for the year ended December 31, 1992 and to consider resolutions thereon.

3) To elect the Board of Directors.  
4) To ratify the External Auditors' fee for the certification of the Accounts for the six months ended June 30, 1992.

Holdings of Common Stock entitled to vote may attend the General Meeting provided that they have deposited their shares at any Branch of the Bank or at Monte Titoli SpA at least five days before the date of the General Meeting, in accordance with the provision of Art. 4 of Law No. 1745 of December 29, 1962. This also applies to all Shareholders of record.

The Chairman of the Board of Directors

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## COMPANY NEWS: UK

## A branch less fruitful than expected

Bids are invited for Meyna, PPI's Turkish offshoot: John Murray Brown reports

CREDITORS of Polly Peck International should say goodbye to any lingering hope of significant cash remittances from Meyna, the company's Turkish fruit and packaging subsidiary. Figures contained in a confidential "information memorandum" sent to prospective buyers, reveal a company currently turning over barely a fifth of the sales reported in PPI's consolidated accounts before the group went into administration in October 1990 owing banks and other creditors £1.13bn.

Whatever may have been the impression in the City of Meyna's contribution to PPI's reported profits of £107m from its near and Middle East operations – out of a group total of £151m – Meyna would now appear to be a medium-sized business, with negligible exports, and about a 5 per cent share of a highly competitive local market.

The decision to invite bids ends one of the more frustrating chapters in a 27-month administration to recover the Turkish assets of the UK-based fruit and electronics group. According to Coopers & Lybrand, one of the two UK accountancy firms in charge of the administration, Meyna is being sold on the basis of the company's own unaudited management and tax accounts – figures which have not been "independently verified," the memorandum says.

"We're confident the numbers on which the sale is being made give a fair picture of the group," said Mr Stuart Smith, the Coopers partner in charge of disposal of the Turkish companies, who said the administrators hoped to be in a position

to conclude the sale in a few weeks.

As early as May 1991, the administrators warned that Meyna's trading performance as reported in Polly Peck's accounts "may be significantly overstated."

However, it is unlikely that many of PPI's 23,000 creditors envisaged quite the magnitude

of the discrepancy.

Meyna incurred net losses – after general and administrative expenses – in 1990, 1991, and the nine months to September 1992. In contrast, the administrators had established from records at Polly Peck's London headquarters that Meyna had reported revenues of TL578bn (£140m) and trading profits of TL185bn for the first six months of 1990. The local management accounts reveal a much more modest performance. For the whole of 1990 Meyna's sales totalled TL251bn for a gross profit of just TL13bn.

Equally modest, the group's assets were valued at TL128bn (£31m). This is hard to match with Turkish Treasury figures which show Meyna as the second largest UK capital investment – Vestel, PPI's Istanbul

electronics subsidiary, being the largest.

Turkish fruit traders, however, were always clear about the size of Meyna. "If Meyna stopped producing tomorrow it would have absolutely no effect on the market here," said the owner of one of the largest fruit companies.

"I think they'll get a very

vested in the Meyna group.

However, the deal is not expected to generate a large sum. Meyna has little in the way of assets, while Kaynak has ceased operations in Ankara, Adana and Izmir.

"What we have left are the Meyna sites at Adana and Mersin and the three other packing houses. It's a conven-

As early as May 1991 the administrators warned that Meyna's trading performance as reported in Polly Peck's accounts "may be significantly overstated". However, it is unlikely that many of the 23,000 creditors of Polly Peck International envisaged quite the magnitude of the discrepancy.

of the discrepancy.

Meyna incurred net losses – after general and administrative expenses – in 1990, 1991, and the nine months to September 1992. In contrast, the administrators had established from records at Polly Peck's London headquarters that Meyna had reported revenues of TL578bn (£140m) and trading profits of TL185bn for the first six months of 1990. The local management accounts reveal a much more modest performance. For the whole of 1990 Meyna's sales totalled TL251bn for a gross profit of just TL13bn.

Equally modest, the group's assets were valued at TL128bn (£31m). This is hard to match with Turkish Treasury figures which show Meyna as the second largest UK capital investment – Vestel, PPI's Istanbul

electronics subsidiary, being the largest.

Turkish fruit traders, however, were always clear about the size of Meyna. "If Meyna stopped producing tomorrow it would have absolutely no effect on the market here," said the owner of one of the largest fruit companies.

"I think they'll get a very

vested in the Meyna group.

However, the deal is not expected to generate a large sum. Meyna has little in the way of assets, while Kaynak has ceased operations in Ankara, Adana and Izmir.

"What we have left are the Meyna sites at Adana and Mersin and the three other packing houses. It's a conven-

Given that the company is suffering losses, one London analyst suggested it was doubtful any buyer would pay more than net asset value and "in fact more likely a discount to net asset value." Meyna's net asset value was put at TL194bn in 1991.

Certainly, there has been an impact on the balance sheet. Already, banks are restricting credit lines, while suppliers demand cash payment. As a result, the group is now working on a contract basis, no longer buying fruit on its own account.

Meyna has been forced to sell one of its five packing houses and another was closed. The Unipac cardboard box facility at Adana is working at about 50 per cent capacity. Since the administration, the fresh produce operation has withdrawn from trading in pulses, raisins and nuts.

The administrators say they are marketing the companies on the basis of their present trading performance. Anything else would be "entering the area of the unknown."

However, a buyer may find it difficult to make an assessment of the group's potential, without figures for the period prior to the administration, which Meyna's management has declined to provide.

This advertisement is issued in compliance with the regulations of The International Stock Exchange of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland Limited ("the London Stock Exchange"). It does not constitute an invitation to any person to subscribe for or purchase shares. Application has been made to the London Stock Exchange for the whole of the ordinary share capital of Channel Holdings plc ("the Company"), issued and to be issued, to be admitted to the Official List. Dealings are expected to commence in the existing Ordinary shares and the Placing shares (fully paid) and to commence in the Rights shares (not paid) on 19th April, 1993.

## CHANNEL HOLDINGS plc

(Incorporated and registered in England under the Companies Acts 1862 to 1890 No. 161681)

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and  
a Rights Issue of 9,089,964 new Ordinary shares  
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following the Placing and the Rights Issue

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£	Number	£	Number
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650,000.00	650,000	650,000.00	650,000
		in ordinary shares of 5p each	
		in convertible redeemable preference shares of £1 each	

No application for listing will be made for the convertible redeemable preference shares.

Channel Holdings plc is an industrial holding company with two principal subsidiaries. Carflow Products (U.K.) Limited, is engaged in the supply of physical car security products to the major motor manufacturers in the United Kingdom and to specialist distributors and retailers. CQR Security Components Limited manufactures and distributes a range of branded products for the security alarm industry.

Copies of the listing particulars relating to the company may be obtained during normal office hours up to and including 29th April, 1993 from:

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a division of Wise Speke Limited 162 Queen Victoria Street  
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and at the registered office of the Company, which is at W H Stentford & Co., 1 Love Lane, London, EC2V 7JJ, and by collection only, up to and including 16th April, 1993 from, the Company Announcements Office at the London Stock Exchange, London Stock Exchange Tower, Capel Court entrance, off Bartholomew Lane, London, EC2N 1HP.

14th April, 1993

## NOTICE OF REDEMPTION

ISIN CODE: US319336AE37

Redemption Date: May 15, 1993

## CS FIRST BOSTON GROUP, INC.

(formerly CS First Boston, Inc. and First Boston, Inc.)

7 3/4% Subordinated Notes Due 1996

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the provisions of Article Eleven of the Indenture Dated as of May 15, 1986 between CS First Boston Group, Inc. (the "Company") and Chemical Bank (successor by merger to Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company) (the "Indenture") and the terms of the Notes the Company will redeem on May 15, 1993, all of the outstanding principal amount of the 7 3/4% Subordinated Notes Due 1996 (the "Notes") issued under the Indenture on May 15, 1993 (the "Redemption Date") at a price (the "Redemption Price") equal to 101 1/8% of the principal amount thereof together with interest accrued and unpaid thereon to the Redemption Date, or \$10,150.00 per \$10,000.00 principal amount of Notes. The regular annual interest due May 15, 1993 will be paid to noteholders according to the terms of the Indenture.

On the Redemption Date, all of the Notes will become due and payable at the Redemption Price specified above, and interest on such Notes shall cease to accrue from and after that date. Payment of the Redemption Price will only be made on or after the Redemption Date upon presentation and surrender of the Notes, together with all coupons appertaining thereto maturing after the Redemption Date, according to the terms of the Indenture at the offices of the paying agents listed below:

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Bankers Trust Luxembourg, S.A. Bankers Trust Company Banque Bruxelles Lambert  
P.O. Box 807 1 Appold Street Avenue Marix 24  
14 Boulevard Franklin D. Roosevelt Broadgate London EC2A 2HE B-1050 Brussels  
L-2450 Luxembourg Belgium

For registered notes only payable within the United States

By mail: Chemical Bank  
Debt Operations Department  
G.P.O. Station, P.O. Box 2862  
New York, New York 10116-2862

By hand: Chemical Bank  
Corporate Tellers Window  
Room 224, North Building  
55 Water Street  
New York City

Payments pursuant to the presentation of registered Notes for redemption made within the United States or by transfer to a United States dollar account maintained by the payee with a bank in the United States may be subject to reporting to the United States Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS") and to backup withholding of 31% of the gross proceeds if a payee fails to provide a paying agent with an executed IRS Form W-9 in the case of a non-U.S. person or an executed IRS Form W-9 in the case of a U.S. person. Those holders who are required to provide their accurate taxpayer identification number and who fail to do so may be subject to an IRS penalty of U.S. \$50. Accordingly, please provide all appropriate certification when presenting the Notes for payment.

Dated: April 14, 1993

CS First Boston Group, Inc.

By: **CHEMICAL BANK,**  
(successor by merger to  
Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company)

## REDEMPTION NOTICE

To the Holders of

International Bank  
for Reconstruction and Development

Undated U.S. Dollar Floating Rate Notes of 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the "IBRD") has elected to exercise its right under the terms and conditions of the above Notes (the "Notes") to redeem all the outstanding principal amount of the Notes on June 15, 1993 (the "Redemption Date") at a price of 100% of the principal amount (the "Redemption Price").

All holders of the Notes will also receive a final payment of interest accrued and unpaid to the Redemption Date, at a rate per annum of 3.500000%, payable on June 15, 1993 in the amount of \$89.51 in respect of each \$10,000 principal amount of Notes and \$2,237.78 in respect of each \$250,000 principal amount of Notes. Coupons due on the Redemption Date should be presented and surrendered in the usual manner. On the Redemption Date, the Redemption Price will become due and payable on the Notes, and interest thereon will cease to accrue. Payment of the Redemption Price for the Notes will be made on or after the Redemption Date upon presentation and surrender to one of the following offices of the Paying Agents, together with all appertinent Coupons and Talons:

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D-6000 Frankfurt am Main  
Kreditbank S.A. Luxembourg  
13 Boulevard Royal  
Luxembourg

Swiss Bank Corporation  
Aeschenvorstadt 1  
1002 Basel

In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Notes, payments of the Redemption Price will be made in U.S. dollars or, at the option of the holder, by transfer to a U.S. dollar account maintained by the payee outside of the United States of America and its possessions, or by a U.S. dollar check drawn on a bank in New York City. No payment shall be made by check mailed to an address in the United States of America or its possessions. Please note that any risk of improper delivery is with the holder of the Notes. Should you have any questions concerning presentation and payment of the Notes, please contact the Fiscal Agent:

Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York  
Corporate Trust Department  
60 Wall Street  
New York, NY 10260-0060  
U.S.A.  
Telephone: (212) 648-9002  
Fax: (212) 618-5111

Dated: April 11, 1993

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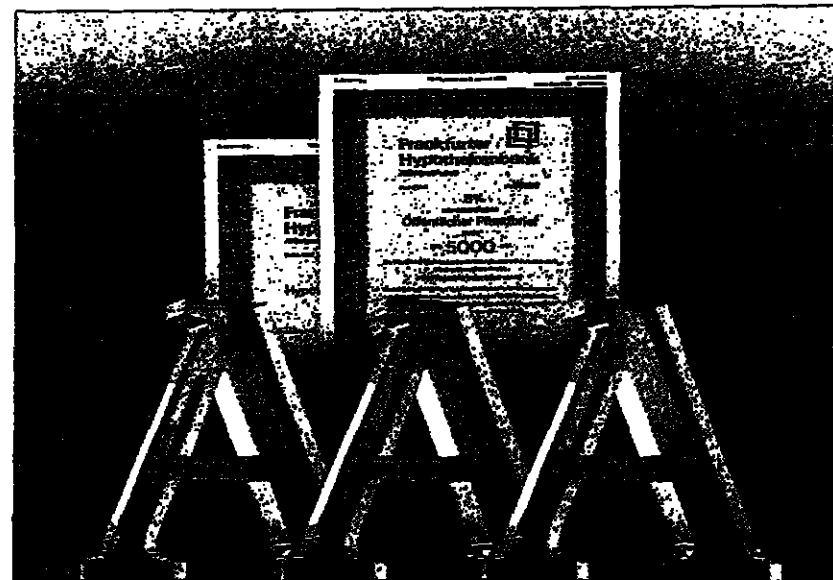
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(comprising £75,000,000 Floating Rate Notes 1993 issued on 18th November 1992 and a further £25,000,000 Floating Rate Notes due 1993 issued on 18th July 1992 and a further £25,000,000 Floating Rate Notes due 1993 issued on 18th August 1992 consolidated and forming a single series thereafter).

In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the three month interest period from (and including) 13th April 1993 to (but excluding) 13th July 1993 the Notes will carry a rate of interest of 6 per cent. per annum. The relevant interest payment date will be 13th July 1993. The coupon amount per £100,000.00 Note will be £249.59 payable against surrender of Coupon No. 30.

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## YORKSHIRE BUILDING SOCIETY

Issue of up to £150,000,000 Floating Rate Notes Due 1997

(of which £100,000,000 was issued on 18th July 1992 as the initial tranche). In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the three month interest period from (and including) 13th April 1993 to (but excluding) 13th July 1993 the Notes will carry a rate of interest of 6.0275 per cent. per annum. The relevant interest payment date will be 13th July 1993. The coupon amount per £100,000.00 Note will be £252.62 payable against surrender of Coupon No. 12.

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مكتبة النجف



## Healthy niches in aviation and defence markets FR Group shows 9% improvement to £23.3m

By Richard Gourlay

FR GROUP yesterday reported pre-tax profits up 9 per cent at £23.3m for the year to December 31 as the company appeared to demonstrate there are some healthy niches within the depressed aviation and defence markets.

Cutbacks in the aviation programmes of most aircraft makers, however, meant the company was continuing to rationalise that side of the business in the face of "a significant downturn in demand" from the high levels of the late 1980s.

Sales were also up 9 per cent at £182.8m while earnings per share rose 7 per cent to 21.48p.

A proposed final dividend of 4.74p brings the total for the year to 7.2p, up 8 per cent.

Mr Gordon Page, chief executive, said that while the aerospace and defence industries were experiencing significant falls in demand there remained continuing demand for FR's products and services.

On its military side, governments were going to spend an increasingly large slice of the smaller defence cake on products and services like FR's surveillance, high tech training capability and its air-to-air refuelling systems.

On the aviation side, Mr Page said FR was reacting to the flow of cutbacks in civilian aircraft programmes by the



Gordon Page: continuing demand for FR's products

likes of McDonnell Douglas, Airbus and Boeing by closing some sites and developing an ability to supply integrated systems rather than components on their own.

The group was cutting 170 jobs this year and last and was closing one factory and integrating the operations of two others. Substantially all the associated cost had been provided within the 1992 accounts.

FR ended the year with net cash of £9.4m, up from £7.8m, in spite of an increased

interest charge on un-hedged foreign exchange denominated debt.

The company has also begun to develop non-military applications for the technology involved in air-to-air refuelling.

Mr Page said the company should this year announce a venture in which it would be able to apply its fluid handling and couplings technology and expertise in the petrochemical or water treatment industries.

### COMMENT

Western countries are for some time going to spend considerable amounts on defence, notwithstanding the peace dividend they are all trying to cash. The trick for investors is to differentiate between those companies metaphorically making submarines and those supplying what the armed forces will continue to need. Judging by the 40 per cent increase in FR's share price since last October, the company has gone some way towards demonstrating it might be a defence contractor with one of the rosier futures.

But FR cannot avoid the pain being felt in aviation, even if it has now put what should be a lucrative components business on a sounder footing. Profits forecast at £25m for this year, would give earnings of 23.2p, and a prospective p/e that might appear relatively cheap at 12 times. On balance this price level is, however, probably about right.

## Rich rewards from white-collar focus

Andrew Bolger looks at Capita and its strategy for success in the public sector.

A TOTAL of 170 finance staff from the London borough of Bromley will soon become employees of Capita Group, which has expanded rapidly by offering management services to the public sector.

Capita's market value has grown seven-fold, to £72m, since flotation in 1989. Pre-tax profits have surged from £700,000 in that year to £4.1m in 1992, on sales of £33.1m.

Unlike other private contractors which have moved in on the public sector, Capita focuses on high-value, high-margin activities such as revenue collection and computers, rather than refuse collection or school meals.

Mr Paul Pinder, Capita's managing director, said: "Providing blue-collar services is not our bag." He believes that methods used by other operators to win public sector contracts - such as cutting the wages and conditions of staff - are not sustainable in the long term.

The Bromley employees, who voted 98 per cent in favour of Capita's offer from a choice of three, will transfer on their existing terms and conditions. Under the £24m contract Capita will, for the next five years, manage most of the borough's exchange services - including payroll, pensions, business rates, council tax and benefits.

Capita estimates that it will save the council £1m over the life of the contract, which is three times the size of any previous "outsourcing" of white-collar services in local

government. It also said new opportunities would be created for the Bromley staff, who have seen their workload diminished by recent changes, such as the move from community charge to council tax.

Although more than 80 per cent of the group's revenues come from work in the public sector, Capita's distinctive contribution has been to apply sophisticated private-sector business techniques to the traditional activities of local authorities and government agencies - particularly the collection of revenue.

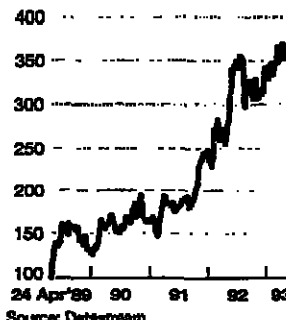
Mr Pinder said: "We want to be in areas that fit - quality areas, with significant margins. That's why we went after revenue - if we can put together something which brings in more cash, then everyone wins."

On behalf of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Capita employs up to 80 people using computerised telephone systems to deal with sales and inquiries for personalised number plates. Since starting in October 1990, it has sold more than 200,000 number plates and raised more than £100m for the Treasury.

Telephoning people at their homes during the evening can be an effective way of raising money. The latest technology from the US allows one operator to make 25-30 calls per hour and be provided with the details of the particular account on a screen when each connection is made. When Capita recently was contracted to call 100,000 people

### Capita Group

Share price relative to the FT-A All-Share Index



Source: Datastream

whose TV licence payments were overdue, nearly half of the 60,000 successfully contacted went out and bought a licence soon afterwards.

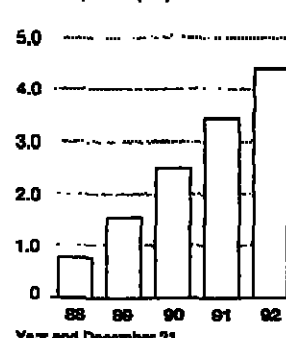
It was success rates like that which encouraged local authorities to use Capita to help collect poll tax.

In spite of offering services which have been championed by the Conservatives, Capita claims it would not have been upset by a Labour victory at the last general election. Mr Pinder said: "We were unconcerned about the prospect of either a Tory or Labour government - but a hung parliament might have brought decision-making to a halt."

To date, Capita has employed local authority staff when taking over contracts, but Mr Pinder said: "Once we have major operating centres, we will offer deals to local authorities which do not involve the transfer of staff."

Following a European direc-

### Pre-tax profits (£m)



Year ended December 31

tive, employees whose jobs are transferred from one employer to another are protected under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations. Capita takes a cautious view of its obligations under the rules, and has fulfilled all of their conditions for the staff it has acquired.

If Capita took on the work but not the employees for a contract, it says the TUPE obligations would have to be honoured - probably by the local or central government department contracting out the work.

The Bromley staff will join Capita's existing workforce of 850, which is divided between two divisions - outsourcing and advisory, which provides consultancy and training services.

Capita's shares enjoy a premium rating - partly because of its rapid history of growth and partly due to the group's expanding opportunities, as "outsourcing" spreads from local authorities to

the NHS and into the heart of central government.

Although analysts remain bullish about the stock, some point out that it is difficult to evaluate Capita's contracts, which are both large and long-term. BZW says: "Capita's businesses are complex and the nature of some of them is such as not to lend themselves to external analysis. Were something to go awry, there may be little warning."

Mr Pinder responds by pointing to the expertise of the seven-strong board, which includes five accountants. The business started in the early eighties when Mr Rod Aird, the current chairman, established a computer services company for the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. In 1989, a management buy-out was supported by 31, the venture capital group.

Mr Pinder said: "We are never going to go in and bid just on price. We recently walked away from a contract worth £10m, on which we had put in nine months' work. In five out of six of the large information technology contracts we won, we were not the cheapest bidder."

Mr Richard Childs, a director, believes contracts are awarded on the basis of quality, added value, price and treatment of staff - in that order.

He said: "We manage the treasurer's lifeblood. If we screw up, the treasurer is going to lose his job."

## Erith losses top £0.56m

LOSSES continued through 1992 at Erith, the builders' merchant, to total £557,000 for the full 1992 year. The group achieved a modest profit of £24,000 in the previous 12 months.

There is no final dividend, leaving the 0.35p interim as the payment against a total of 2p. Losses per share were 0.82p (earnings 0.09p).

Sales slipped to £66.3m

(£67.5m) and generated an operating profit of £129,000 (£72,000).

The year was punctuated by a series of false dawns - the last two months of the year saw particularly adverse trading conditions, directors said.

### Sykes-Pickavant lower at £629,000

Sykes-Pickavant, the USM-quoted manufacturer of hand tools and diagnostic equipment, reported another downturn in 1992 with pre-tax

profits of £629,000, compared with £731,000 previously and £1.1m for 1990.

Turnover improved from £18.2m to £18.7m, reflecting an increase in export sales and a full year's trading from Auto Service Products.

After a lower tax charge, earnings per share were 6.25p (5.25p) but the final dividend is halved to 1.75p for a total of 4p (5.75p).

There was an extraordinary charge of £511,000, mainly related to writing off the investment in Motortest of Germany.

### Buy-out at Maiden Advertising

Maiden Outdoor Advertising, the independent private poster contractor, has been acquired by its management in a buy-out financed by Morgan Grenfell Development Capital.

Morgan Grenfell and Nat-West Acquisition Finance have respectively underwritten the institutional equity and debt commitment of the financing package which amounts to about £21m.

The funds will finance the

acquisition and provide for future growth.

### ICI completes Canadian disposal

Imperial Chemical Industries has completed the disposal of its Canadian-based nitrogen products business to Terra Industries, of Sioux City, Iowa, for C\$68m (£35.6m) cash.

The sale included ICI's anhydrous ammonia plant and related upgrading facilities in Sarnia, Ontario, and its interest in 32 "agromart" farm ser-

vice centres in Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Combined sales from ICI's Canadian nitrogen products and "agromart" operations totalled about C\$250m in 1992.

### Bruntcliffe moves into aggregates

Bruntcliffe Investments is to raise some £3.6m via a placing of 16m shares at 25p to fund its proposed move into aggregates extraction and coal reprocessing.

The company also intends to

change its name to Bruntcliffe Aggregates and apply to the Stock Exchange for a listing.

Bruntcliffe, which has recently sold its investment portfolio, is to acquire Lorasen Holdings - a company with aggregate reserves and surface coal deposits near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania - and Ideal Aggregates - a Warwickshire-based mineral extraction company.

The company also proposes to convert each of its preference shares into five new ordinary shares and five deferred shares. The deferred shares

will have no value and will be cancelled following approval of the High Court.

### EFM Dragon bid terms finalised

EFM Dragon Trust has finalised the terms of its all-share offer for Drayton Asia, its rival Far Eastern investment trust.

Holders of 100 Drayton shares will receive 694 new Dragon shares. The offer is now unconditional in all respects and remains open for acceptance until further notice.

FINANCIAL TIMES CONFERENCES

## FINANCIAL INNOVATION

### New Directions for the 90s

28 & 29 April 1993, London

Innovation is the key to the success of many financial institutions but can be the cause of their downfall. The lesson of the 80s was that properly managed innovation gives a sharp competitive edge.

What will be the trends of the 90s? Which fields will be the most fruitful for financial innovation? Will risk and reward balance? How will innovation affect the City and other financial centres?

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## COMMODITIES AND AGRICULTURE

## Fox suspends raw sugar trade

By David Blackwell

TRADING IN London's raw sugar contract was suspended yesterday by the London Futures and Options Exchange (Liffe). But the search is on for a replacement contract, which it is thought could be launched this summer.

Mr Robin Woodhead, Liffe chief executive, said a report by Landfill Mills Commodities Studies had suggested that no single factor had been behind the sharp decline in the exchange's raw sugar volumes. But moves from sterling to dollars, from floor to screen and back again, and the addition of Cuba as a country of deliverable origin had all done harm. Business switched to the relatively young and very liquid New York market.

Last month London raw sugar volume fell to 1,399 lots compared with 4,384 lots in March last year. In January 1991, when trading was switched to screens in a bid to boost volumes, the contract traded 120,176 lots.

Sugar trading, which began in London in the late 1880s, will be continued in the screen-based white contract - probably the world's most successful screen-traded commodity. But Mr Woodhead reported a groundswell of support from

trade and brokerage houses for the exchange to create a new raws contract.

Response from the trade in London and New York yesterday was mixed. "It is essentially the main sugar trade in London who dropped the contract in the first place. Why do they now say they want it continued?" asked one seasoned observer. Changing any contract was always a sure way to lose volume, he said, pointing out that London's virtually untouched cocoa contract was Fox's most successful market.

Mr Chris Pack, analyst with Czarukow, a leading London trader, said any international instrument needed stability. "Once you have lost it, it is very difficult to retrieve."

However, another London trader said reports of the death of raw sugar trading in London were greatly exaggerated. He suggested that a new contract - possibly screen based - would attract arbitrage business with New York.

Several US traders pointed out that their companies had stopped using London when it decided to accept Cuban sugar for delivery, as dealing in Cuban sugar was against US law. They would welcome a revived London market, especially in the light of recent renewed interest in sugar.

## PNG plans 50% stake in Lihir gold project

By Kevin Brown in Sydney

THE GOVERNMENT OF Papua New Guinea (PNG) yesterday said it would take a half share in the US\$760m Lihir island gold project unless RTZ Corporation and Muggill Mining, the joint venture partners, find a third partner within a month.

The announcement comes only days after the government said it would increase its proposed stake in Lihir from 20 per cent to 30 per cent to achieve parity with the Australian-run Porgera gold project.

Mr Padas Wingti, prime minister, said after a cabinet meeting in Port Moresby that the government had decided to take a 50 per cent shareholding to make sure the project was not delayed.

He said the joint venture partners had indicated the project faced "financing difficulties".

The announcement appeared to surprise the joint venture partners. Muggill Mining, which owns 20 per cent of the project, said it had received no official notification of the proposal.

The Lihir Joint Venture (LJV), which represents both companies, said it was considering its response and hoped "to continue discussions with the PNG government in the near future".

The government was expected to pay US\$37.5m for a 20 per cent stake which would reduce Muggill's shareholding from 20 per cent to 14 per cent, and RTZ's from 80 per cent to 56 per cent.

Lac Minerals of Canada, one of a number of companies RTZ talked to about taking a shareholding, withdrew from the project last year, and the development has been delayed by RTZ's failure to find a fresh taker for a 15 per cent stake.

Vanadium: European free market, min. 99 per cent, \$ a lb V<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, cif, 1.55-1.65 (same).

URANIUM: Nueco exchange value, \$ per lb, U<sub>3</sub>O<sub>8</sub>, 7.45 (same).

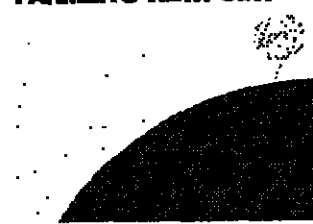
MINOR METALS STOCKS (as at Thursday's close)

Aluminium	\$800	to 1,782,225
Copper	1,450	to 367,250
Lead	1,250	to 247,375
Nickel	88,250	to 88,250
Zinc	1,550	to 894,200
Tin	5	to 19,650

## Domesday in a big brown envelope

Cereal and beef producers wanting set aside payments have their paperwork cut out

## FARMER'S VIEWPOINT



By David Richardson

LARGE BROWN envelopes marked MAFF and weighing a total of some 20 tonnes thudded through British farmers' letter boxes last week. Many of the cereal and beef farmers to whom these packages were addressed will have spent much of their Easter holiday poring over the contents. For they contained the dramatically dubbed "Domesday" forms, otherwise known as "The Integrated Administration and Control System".

They are the direct result of the reform last May of the Common Agricultural Policy. If farmers do not complete them correctly those who grow cereals and produce beef will not be eligible for arable area payments in compensation for setting aside 15 per cent of their cereal land or for headage payments on controlled numbers of cattle.

Each form has 19 columns of questions which farmers must answer, giving every detail about every field under their control - its Ordnance Survey sheet number, its national grid reference, its size (in hectares, not acres) to two decimal places, the crop it is growing, the variety of the seed, its estimated yield, etc etc etc. Each part field must be recorded on a separate line which, in practice, because of split cropping perhaps, or the fact that the whole field may not appear on

just one map, means that some fields run to five or six lines. Copies of the maps themselves must be included with the forms when they are returned. Rather more than 20 tonnes of paper will shortly be heading back to MAFF, I suspect.

Before a farmer attempts to fill in the IACS forms he is advised to read and fully understand the 78-page book of instructions which accompanied them. For if there is a delay in returning the forms, or a mistake is made, the penalties are harsh. For instance, if the forms, correct in every detail, are returned to MAFF later than the May 15 deadline the farmer concerned will have his aid reduced by 1 per cent for each day by which the return is delayed. If this extends beyond 20 days he will lose the whole of his entitlement. There are similar penalties for accidental inaccuracy and threats of criminal prosecution.

It is unlikely there will be much public sympathy for an industry about to receive close to £1bn of public money merely because its participants are required to fill in some forms. But to understand farmers' hostility to the massive bureaucracy it should be remembered that most farmers do not want set-aside in the first place and never thought that it would work: that they would rather be growing crops or producing meat from their land than allowing weeds to regenerate on 15 per cent of it, and that while those forms have taken hundreds of experts 10 months to write, the farmers who have to complete them have barely five weeks to gather together all the necessary facts and evidence and return them.

To the layman, that may sound more than adequate time. But 67 people are leaving the land each week, leaving a growing number of farmers to do all the work on their holdings themselves. And this at a particularly busy time of year that involves being on a tractor from dawn to dusk or perhaps on duty in the lambing shed for 20 or more hours a day.

It would not be so bad if the related services were on the ball and helpful. As it is I know from personal experience that the local Ordnance Survey map office does not open until

10.30 am (weekdays only), by which time there is invariably a queue of irate farmers banging on the door.

For next Friday is effectively the last day for placing orders for maps with any hope of getting them in time for May 15. In desperation many farmers are seeking assistance with the forms from land agents, their agricultural merchants or consultants who have advertised such a service.

On the other side, so to speak, MAFF has employed 500 extra staff to check the forms, inspect and measure fields and try to identify fraud and, MAFF also intends using aerial photographs and satellite images to double check farmers' returns. And £25m has been allocated for policing the scheme.

Inevitably UK farmers have expressed suspicions that within the European Community they may be the victims of enthusiastic British bureaucracy, while the farmers of other member states may be getting away with much less. This, apparently, cannot be fully substantiated.

It is reported that some countries, notably Portugal and Spain, have used the form as an excuse to ask extra questions on which they required answers on matters unconnected with CAP reform. Ireland has not yet sent out its forms and Greece produced such a complicated draft that

farmers' organisations have so far refused to agree to its distribution.

Germany issued its forms a month earlier than the UK - although farmers spanning state borders have to complete two versions - while our nearest neighbours across the North Sea appear to have come closest to reason. Denmark's form runs to eight pages, Belgium's to six and Holland's to only four.

But British farmers have some justification for feeling they are being asked to carry a bigger bureaucratic burden than the rest. In the Community as a whole, 94 per cent of the arable land area escapes set-aside regulations and therefore these forms, because of small farm exemptions. More than 88 per cent of the arable land is not involved; in Luxembourg the figure is 77 per cent and in Italy 71 per cent. Other Mediterranean member states and those with poor farming structure qualify for rather lower exemptions while even Holland has 36 per cent of its area outside the scheme; Germany 27 per cent and France 18 per cent.

In the UK, however, small farm exemptions represent only 4 per cent of the arable area. That is the reason why almost any farmer you may have seen over Easter will have been even more grumpy than usual.

## Danes end fish protest

By Xueling Lin in Copenhagen

A TWO-WEEK long action by Danish fishermen ended yesterday when the two largest fishing associations agreed to a government rescue package for the industry, which has been hit by cheap imported fish and cuts in EC catch quotas.

Exports of fish and fisheries products in 1992 were about Dkr13bn.

Fishermen mounted blockades of ports, fish processing

factories and trucks transporting foreign fish through Denmark, the action culminating in a freeze on all fishing by Danish fishing vessels.

The demands met in the agreement include an increase in fish quotas, in particular cod and sole, cheaper long term loans, improved taxation rules, pension payments for retiring fishermen and better compensation for scrapped vessels, which are part of measures to cut the size of the fishing fleet.

The government was expected to pay US\$37.5m for a 20 per cent stake which would reduce Muggill's shareholding from 20 per cent to 14 per cent, and RTZ's from 80 per cent to 56 per cent.

Lac Minerals of Canada, one of a number of companies RTZ talked to about taking a shareholding, withdrew from the project last year, and the development has been delayed by RTZ's failure to find a fresh taker for a 15 per cent stake.

## Turkish agriculture approaches watershed

John Murray Brown on a project to harness the Tigris and Euphrates for irrigation

THE WORLD'S second largest single source irrigation scheme will be inaugurated by Turkey's prime minister, Suleyman Demirel, on May 23, when the large 24km Ufa tunnels are opened to take water from the Ataturk dam to the Haran plain on the border with Syria.

The twin tunnels, providing water for 1.7m hectares of farmland along Turkey's border with Syria and Iraq, form part of the largest engineering undertaking in any country bordering the Mediterranean.

The South-East Anatolian development, or GAP, has already aroused criticism from Turkey's downstream neighbours. It will be the task of the UK water engineer, Sir William Halcrow and Partners, which has been awarded a US\$12m consultancy contract, to design an irrigation system which meets the various political, economic and environmental concerns.

Halcrow's findings could decide the future shape of farming in Turkey, providing a blueprint for irrigation in other parts of the country. Water management is at the heart of Turkey's attempts to harness the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for agriculture. Turkey already earns almost \$3bn from farm product exports, about 20 per cent of total export earnings. GAP is expected to increase Turkey's irrigated farmland by a third, doubling wheat production and increasing cotton output more than fivefold.

After going it alone for so long, Turkey is soliciting foreign advice on a number of critical aspects of the project, an indication of desire to avoid the criticism associated with other large scale public investment irrigation schemes.

The French group Compagnie Nationale Bas Rhone Lanquedoc is surveying the main canal system. Alexander Gibb, the UK consultant, has a sub-contract to look at road infrastructure. Tubitak, the Turkish science research institute, is studying agricultural credit

policy. The German company APC is looking at market strategy.

At Cukurova university, scientists are making studies of everything from the reproductive habits of bees - vital for future pollination purposes in such a vast monoculture crop scheme - to the region's soils. Halcrow's project will focus on issues of land ownership, land quality, topography, climate, water availability and the social, religious and economic attitudes of farmers in the region. It will advise on the teaching of extension skills for farmers unused to modern farm methods, on cost recovery and conservation technologies for downstream users.

Water is perhaps the Middle East's most vital resource and control of both the Euphrates and the Tigris would make Turkey a vital player in settlement of the region's water disputes in any future Arab-Israeli negotiation. Foreign hydrologists have long argued for more prudent management

There are many obstacles. Today Turkish farmers are charged for their water according to volume used but to the quality of the land being irrigated - the poorer the soils the cheaper the water. According to Mr Halcrow, GAP, deputy president of the GAP authority, "the farmers use as much water as they want. It is not even calculated."

Repayment of loans in Turkey's south east region is 30-40 per cent, compared with a national figure of 75-80 per cent for agricultural credits. Many agronomists believe there will have to be widespread land reform, not so much for equity as efficiency.

There is little prospect of increasing scale economies in a region where according to one calculation, more than a quarter of the cultivated land is owned by less than 1 per cent of the region's farmers. Equally striking is that 61 per cent of farmers own less than five hectares of land. The environmental challenge

is even more urgent. No more than 30 per cent of the planned 1.7m hectares is likely to use the more expensive drip or pressurised hose irrigation, the rest being open furrow system.

Western officials say there is a new urgency as farmers prepare to irrigate the first 40,000 hectares on the Haran plain, close to the Syrian border.

The land use issue is political at a time of rising violence in Kurdish speaking areas. According to one senior official, the explicit aim of the GAP project is to "reduce the rural population," through land consolidation and provision of alternative industry in urban areas.

Many officials believe the jobs created by the GAP will help accelerate this process. In the long run, Ankara sees the demographic cards stacked in its favour, and that this, more than any olive branch of reform, is the best way to undermine the power base of the Kurdish guerrillas.

## MINOR METALS PRICES

Prices from Metal Bulletin (last week's in brackets).

ANTIMONY: European free market, min. 99.6 per cent, \$ per tonne, in warehouse, 1,640-1,700 (same).

BISMUTH: European free market, min. 99.9 per cent, \$ per lb, tonne lots in warehouse, 2,302-2,500 (same).

CADMIUM: European free market, min. 99.5 per cent, \$ per lb, in warehouse, 0.35-0.45 (same).

COBALT: European free market, 99.5 per cent, \$ per lb, in warehouse, 15.00-15.50 (same).

MERCURY: European free market, min. 99.9 per cent, \$ per 75 lb flask, in warehouse, 120-140 (same).

MOLYBDENUM: European free market, drummed molybdenum oxide, \$ per lb Mo, in warehouse, 2.20-2.25 (same).

SELENIUM: European free market, min. 99.5 per cent, \$ per lb, in warehouse, 4.70-5.40 (same).

TUNGSTEN ORE: European free market, standard min. 65 per cent, \$ per tonne unit (10 kg) WO<sub>3</sub>, cif, 31-43 (same).

VANADIUM: European free market, min. 99 per cent, \$ a lb V<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, cif, 1.55-1.65 (same).

URANIUM: Nueco exchange value, \$ per lb, U<sub>3</sub>O<sub>8</sub>, 7.45 (same).

MINOR METALS STOCKS (as at Thursday's close)

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## MARKET REPORT

ZINC closed near seven-week highs on the LME, largely reflecting technical factors. The early breach of chart resistance around \$1,030 a tonne for three-month metal triggered fund short covering and further buying. Talk also circulated of production cuts, centred on Pacific Rim countries, although no news had emerged by the close. Three-month COPPER was firmer, as the market staged a recovery from last week's five-year lows and moved above \$2,050 a tonne. But business was not particularly active, while volatility levels in traded options eased, reflecting calmer conditions. Trading on the

London bullion market was thin after the holiday weekend, with few new fundamental factors to sustain prices. Chartists said both GOLD and SILVER were consolidating above recent lows but forecast renewed weakness near term. Early firmness in Europe was attributed to the overnight rise in the Nikkei index and the unrest in South Africa after the weekend slaying of Communist Party leader Chris Han. But these factors were played down later as New York opened mixed.

Compiled from Reuters

## London Markets

SPOT MARKETS	
Cash	1m
Crude oil (per barrel FOB May)	
Dubai	\$18.59-5.60 +0.31
Brent Blend (std)	\$18.78-4.78 +0.28
West Texas	\$18.98-5.00 +0.28
WTI (1m std)	\$20.45-4.80 +0.37
Oil products	
WTI prompt delivery per tonne CIF	
Premium Gasoline	\$20.00-0.08
Gas oil	\$17.10-1.19 +0.2
Heavy Fuel Oil	\$7.78
Naphtha	\$17.10-1.19 +0.5
Petroleum Argus Estimates	
Other	
Gold per troy oz	\$336.50 -0.4
Silver per troy oz	\$24.50 -0.5
Platinum per troy oz	\$801.50 +0.75
Palladium per troy oz	\$112.00 +0.75
Copper (US Producer)	\$55.00 -1.75
Lead (US Producer)	\$14.20 +0.01
Tin (Kuala Lumpur market)	\$200.00 -0.5
Zinc (US Prime Western)	\$60.00
Cocoa (US weight)	135.75p -0.57
Shear (five weight)	142.50p +1.17
Plas five weight	92.15p -1.77
London daily sugar (white)	\$208.2 -3.8
London daily sugar (white)	\$208.0 -4.5
Bate and Lyle export price	\$208.5 -4.5
Telex (English lead)	\$144.50
Telex (US 3 yellow)	\$171.0
Wheat (US Dark Northern)	11.00
Rubber (May)	56.00p -1
Rubber (July)	56.00p -1
Rubber (RSS No 1 May)	214.00p
Cocoa oil (May)	\$400.50 +0.5
Palm oil (May)	\$400.50 +0.5
Cocoa (May)	\$208.5 -4.5
Soyabean (US)	\$11.42 -1
Cotton (US index)	35.75p

£ a tonne unless otherwise stated, p=per cent, c=cent, f=futures, m=month, w=week, y=year, u=unit, \$=US dollar, £=pound sterling, \$/t=US dollar per tonne, \$/lb=US dollar per pound, \$/oz=US dollar per ounce, \$/kg=US dollar per kilogram, \$/m³=US dollar per cubic metre, \$/m²=US dollar per square metre, \$/m=US dollar per metre, \$/cm=US dollar per centimetre, \$/mm=US dollar per millimetre, \$/mm²=US dollar per square millimetre, \$/mm³=US dollar per cubic millimetre, \$/mm⁴=US dollar per fourth power of millimetre, \$/mm⁵=US dollar per fifth power of millimetre, \$/mm⁶=US dollar per sixth power of millimetre, \$/mm⁷=US dollar per seventh power of millimetre, \$/mm⁸=US dollar per eighth power of millimetre, \$/mm⁹=US dollar per ninth power of millimetre, \$/mm¹⁰=US dollar per tenth power of millimetre, \$/mm¹¹=US dollar per eleventh power of millimetre, \$/mm¹²=US dollar per twelfth power of millimetre, \$/mm¹³=US dollar per thirteenth power of millimetre, \$/mm¹⁴=US dollar per 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hundred-sixty-sixth power of millimetre, \$/mm¹⁶⁷=US dollar per hundred-sixty-seventh power of millimetre, \$/mm¹⁶⁸=US dollar per







**INVESTMENT TRUSTS - Con**

مكتبة الأصيل



مركز الأبحاث

LONDON SHARE SERVICE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS - Cont.

Notes	Price	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2423	2424	2425	2426	2427	2428	2429	2430	2431	2432	2433	2434	2435	2436	2437	2438	2439	2440	2441	2442	2443	2444	2445	2446	2447	2448	2449	2450	2451	2452	2453	2454	2455	2456	2457	2458	2459	2460	2461	2462	2463	2464	2465	2466	2467	2468	2469	2470	2471	2472	2473	2474	2475	2476	2477	2478	2479	2480	2481	2482	2483	2484	2485	2486	2487	2488	2489	2490	2491	2492	2493	2494	2495	2496	2497	2498	2499	2500	2501	2502	2503	2504	2505	2506	2507	2508	2509	2510	2511	2512	2513	2514	2515	2516	2517	2518	2519	2520	2521	2522	2523	2524	2525	2526	2527	2528	2529	2530	2531	2532	2533	2534	2535	2536	2537	2538	2539	2540	2541	2542	2543	2544	2545	2546	2547	2548	2549	2550	2551	2552	2553	2554	2555	2556	2557	2558	2559	2560	2561	2562	2563	2564	2565	2566	2567	2568	2569	2570	2571	2572	2573	2574	2575	2576	2577	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585	2586	2587	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594	2595	2596	2597	2598	2599	2600	2601	2602	2603	2604	2605	2606	2607	2608	2609	2610	2611	2612	2613	2614	2615	2616	2617	2618	2619	2620	2621	2622	2623	2624	2625	2626	2627	2628	2629	2630	2631	2632	2633	2634	2635	2636	2637	2638	2639	2640	2641	2642	2643	2644	2645	2646	2647	2648	2649	2650	2651	2652	2653	2654	2655	2656	2657	2658	2659	2660	2661	2662	2663	2664	2665	2666	2667	2668	2669	2670	2671	2672	2673	2674	2675	2676	2677	2678	2679	2680	2681	2682	2683	2684	2685	2686	2687	2688	2689	2690	2691	2692	2693	2694	2695	2696	2697	2698	2699	2700	2701	2702	2703	2704	2705	2706	2707	2708	2709	2710	2711	2712	2713	2714	2715	2716	2717	2718	2719	2720	2721	2722	2723	2724	2725	2726	2727	2728	2729	2730	2731	2732	2733	2734	2735	2736	2737	2738	2739	2740	2741	2742	2743	2744	2745	2746	2747	2748	2749	2750	2751	2752	2753	2754	2755	2756	2757	2758	2759	2760	2761	2762	2763	2764	2765	2766	2767	2768	2769	2770	2771	2772	2773	2774	2775	2776	2777	2778	2779	2780	2781	2782	2783	2784	2785	2786	2787	2788	2789	2790	2791	2792	2793	2794	2795	2796	2797	2798	2799	2800	2801	2802	2803	2804	2805	2806	2807	2808	2809	2810	2811	2812	2813	2814	2815	2816	2817	2818	2819	2820	2821	2822	2823	2824	2825	2826	2827	2828	2829	2830	2831	2832	2833	2834	2835	2836	2837	2838	2839	2840	2841	2842	2843	2844	2845	2846	2847	2848	2849	2850	2851	2852	2853	2854	2855	2856	2857	2858	2859	2860	2861	2862	2863	2864	2865	2866	2867	2868	2869	2870	2871	2872	2873	2874	2875	2876	2877	2878	2879	2880	2881	2882	2883	2884	2885	2886	2887	2888	2889	2890	2891	2892	2893	2894	2895	2896	2897	2898	2899	2900	2901	2902	2903	2904	2905	2906	2907	2908	2909	2910	2911	2912	2913	2914	2915	2916	2917	2918	2919	2920	2921	2922	2923	2924	2925	2926	2927	2928	2929	2930	2931	2932	2933	2934	2935	2936	2937	2938	2939	2940	2941	2942	2943	2944	2945	2946	2947	2948	2949	2950	2951	2952	2953	2954	2955	2956	2957	2958	2959	2960	2961	2962	2963	2964	2965	2966	2967	2968	2969	2970	2971	2972	2973	2974	2975	2976	2977	2978	2979	2980	2981	2982	2983	2984	2985	2986	2987	2988	298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Continued on next page



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## CURRENCIES, MONEY AND CAPITAL MARKETS

## FOREIGN EXCHANGES

## \$ slides on poor sales data

DISAPPOINTING retail sales figures from the US imposed further pressure on an already ailing US dollar, which was weaker across the board yesterday, and suffered a sharp fall against the D-Mark, writes Peter John.

Economists had expected the March sales figures to be poor but had, nevertheless, anticipated a slight rise. When the news broke that they had actually fallen by one per cent against the previous month the dollar tumbled through the DM1.6500 level.

This followed last week's poorly received CPI figures and led to a wave of heavy, computer generated stop-loss selling.

However, there was some comment that the reaction was overdone. Mr Nick Parsons an economist with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce said: "Everyone is worried about the US recovery but the US has a recovery rate that Europe would kill for."

Dealers said volumes were low and they expected the dollar to bounce back before being hit again and falling, according to some, as low as DM1.5700. The dollar closed at DM1.5790 down from DM1.6070 previously.

The Yen was strong again,

although held back by intervention from the Bank of Japan. The Japanese currency was boosted by news of a ¥13.2 trillion economic stimulation package announced by the Liberal Democratic Party. The extent of the package, which still has to be ratified by the government, was generally predicted and the Yen closed in London only marginally higher against the dollar at ¥113.35.

Meanwhile, sterling performed well in early sessions hitting DM2.4725 at best as sentiment was buoyed by a growing feeling that the economy is on the turn while Germany is heading for what could be its worst recession since the Second World War.

Mr Neil MacKinnon, the chief economist at Citibank, believes the only black spot on the horizon is the worsening trade gap and with good fundamentals in place, the pound is set to break through DM2.50 in the short-term and hit

DM2.65 within the next 12 months. Sterling closed at DM2.4625, up from DM2.4500 previously.

The Franc was unaffected by a two-per cent cut in the upper limit emergency lending rate. The cut underlines growing economic confidence in France but merely brings the emergency rate in line with overnight lending. The currency strengthened to FF330.00 against the D-Mark from FF325.00.

Elsewhere in Europe, the peseta and escudo were both under pressure. The Spanish currency was affected by the decision of Mr Felipe Gonzalez, the prime minister, to call a general election five months early. It eased to Ptas72.11 against the D-Mark, down from Ptas71.61.

The Bank of Portugal intervening to support the escudo which nevertheless fell to Esc93.16 against the D-Mark from Esc92.97.

## IN NEW YORK

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## STERLING INDEX

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## CURRENCY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## CURRENCY MOVEMENTS

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## OTHER CURRENCIES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## MONEY MARKETS

## Futures tightly traded

SEVERAL small pieces of positive economic news failed to break through the post-holiday lethargy yesterday and both the money and financial futures markets generated scant enthusiasm, writes Peter John.

An announcement that the French upper-limit emergency lending rate was to be cut by two percentage points to 10 per cent prompted some buying of Libor futures.

However, dealers soon appreciated that the rate was so far out of line with the overnight lending rate that the cut made little difference. In spite of an optimistic statement from Mr Edmond Alphandery, the new economics minister, predicting further interest rate falls, the contract for June delivery settled unchanged at 91.81 on low turnover.

UK clearing bank base lending rate from January 26, 1993

## FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## LONDON MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## LONDON MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## EUROPEAN CURRENCY UNIT RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## POUND SPOT - FORWARD AGAINST THE POUND

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## DOLLAR SPOT - FORWARD AGAINST THE DOLLAR

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## EURO-CURRENCY INTEREST RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## EXCHANGE CROSS RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## LONDON MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## LONDON MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
12 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			

## MONEY RATES

	12 month	24 month	36 month	48 month	60 month
1 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
3 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
6 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.5470			
9 month	1.5555-1.5565	1.5490-1.547			







4 pm close April 13

## NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE COMPOSITE PRICES

FINANCIAL TIMES WEDNESDAY APRIL 14 1993

A - B									
Symbol	Price	Change	Symbol	Price	Change	Symbol	Price	Change	Symbol
1000	100.00		1000	100.00		1000	100.00		1000
1001	100.00		1001	100.00		1001	100.00		1001
1002	100.00		1002	100.00		1002	100.00		1002
1003	100.00		1003	100.00		1003	100.00		1003
1004	100.00		1004	100.00		1004	100.00		1004
1005	100.00		1005	100.00		1005	100.00		1005
1006	100.00		1006	100.00		1006	100.00		1006
1007	100.00		1007	100.00		1007	100.00		1007
1008	100.00		1008	100.00		1008	100.00		1008
1009	100.00		1009	100.00		1009	100.00		1009
1010	100.00		1010	100.00		1010	100.00		1010
1011	100.00		1011	100.00		1011	100.00		1011
1012	100.00		1012	100.00		1012	100.00		1012
1013	100.00		1013	100.00		1013	100.00		1013
1014	100.00		1014	100.00		1014	100.00		1014
1015	100.00		1015	100.00		1015	100.00		1015
1016	100.00		1016	100.00		1016	100.00		1016
1017	100.00		1017	100.00		1017	100.00		1017
1018	100.00		1018	100.00		1018	100.00		1018
1019	100.00		1019	100.00		1019	100.00		1019
1020	100.00		1020	100.00		1020	100.00		1020
1021	100.00		1021	100.00		1021	100.00		1021
1022	100.00		1022	100.00		1022	100.00		1022
1023	100.00		1023	100.00		1023	100.00		1023
1024	100.00		1024	100.00		1024	100.00		1024
1025	100.00		1025	100.00		1025	100.00		1025
1026	100.00		1026	100.00		1026	100.00		1026
1027	100.00		1027	100.00		1027	100.00		1027
1028	100.00		1028	100.00		1028	100.00		1028
1029	100.00		1029	100.00		1029	100.00		1029
1030	100.00		1030	100.00		1030	100.00		1030
1031	100.00		1031	100.00		1031	100.00		1031
1032	100.00		1032	100.00		1032	100.00		1032
1033	100.00		1033	100.00		1033	100.00		1033
1034	100.00		1034	100.00		1034	100.00		1034
1035	100.00		1035	100.00		1035	100.00		1035
1036	100.00		1036	100.00		1036	100.00		1036
1037	100.00		1037	100.00		1037	100.00		1037
1038	100.00		1038	100.00		1038	100.00		1038
1039	100.00		1039	100.00		1039	100.00		1039
1040	100.00		1040	100.00		1040	100.00		1040
1041	100.00		1041	100.00		1041	100.00		1041
1042	100.00		1042	100.00		1042	100.00		1042
1043	100.00		1043	100.00		1043	100.00		1043
1044	100.00		1044	100.00		1044	100.00		1044
1045	100.00		1045	100.00		1045	100.00		1045
1046	100.00		1046	100.00		1046	100.00		1046
1047	100.00		1047	100.00		1047	100.00		1047
1048	100.00		1048	100.00		1048	100.00		1048
1049	100.00		1049	100.00		1049	100.00		1049
1050	100.00		1050	100.00		1050	100.00		1050
1051	100.00		1051	100.00		1051	100.00		1051
1052	100.00		1052	100.00		1052	100.00		1052
1053	100.00		1053	100.00		1053	100.00		1053
1054	100.00		1054	100.00		1054	100.00		1054
1055	100.00		1055	100.00		1055	100.00		1055
1056	100.00		1056	100.00		1056	100.00		1056
1057	100.00		1057	100.00		1057	100.00		1057
1058	100.00		1058	100.00		1058	100.00		1058
1059	100.00		1059	100.00		1059	100.00		1059
1060	100.00		1060	100.00		1060	100.00		1060
1061	100.00		1061	100.00		1061	100.00		1061
1062	100.00		1062	100.00		1062	100.00		1062
1063	100.00		1063	100.00		1063	100.00		1063
1064	100.00		1064	100.00		1064	100.00		1064
1065	100.00		1065	100.00		1065	100.00		1065
1066	100.00		1066	100.00		1066	100.00		1066
1067	100.00		1067	100.00		1067	100.00		1067
1068	100.00		1068	100.00		1068	100.00		1068
1069	100.00		1069	100.00		1069	100.00		1069
1070	100.00		1070	100.00		1070	100.00		1070
1071	100.00		1071	100.00		1071	100.00		1071
1072	100.00		1072	100.00		1072	100.00		1072
1073	100.00		1073	100.00		1073	100.00		1073
1074	100.00		1074	100.00		1074	100.00		1074
1075	100.00		1075	100.00		1075	100.00		1075
1076	100.00		1076	100.00		1076	100.00		1076
1077	100.00		1077	100.00		1077	100.00		1077
1078	100.00		1078	100.00		1078	100.00		1078
1079	100.00		1079	100.00		1079	100.00		1079
1080	100.00		1080	100.00		1080	100.00		1080
1081	100.00		1081	100.00		1081	100.00		1081
1082	100.00		1082	100.00		1082	100.00		1082
1083	100.00		1083	100.00		1083	100.00		1083
1084	100.00		1084	100.00		1084	100.00		1084
1085	100.00		1085	100.00		1085	100.00		1085
1086	100.00		1086	100.00		1086	100.00		1086
1087	100.00		1087	100.00		1087	100.00		1087
1088	100.00		1088	100.00		1088	100.00		1088
1089	100.00		1089	100.00		1089	100.00		1089
1090	100.00		1090	100.00		1090	100.00		1090
1091	100.00		1091	100.00		1091	100.00		1091
1092	100.00		1092	100.00		1092	100.00		1092
1093	100.00		1093	100.00		1093	100.00		1093
1094	100.00		1094	100.00		1094	100.00		1094
1095	100.00		1095	100.00		1095	100.00		1095
1096	100.00		1096	100.00		1096	100.00		1096
1097	100.00		1097	100.00		1097	100.00		1097
1098	100.00		1098	100.00		1098	100.00		1098
1099	100.00		1099	100.00		1099	100.00		1099
1100	100.00		1100	100.00		1100	100.00		1100
1101	100.00		1101	100.00		1101	100.00		1101
1102	100.00		1102	100.00		1102	100.00		1102
1103	100.00		1103	100.00		1103	100.00		1103
1104	100.00		1104	100.00		1104	100.00		1104
1105	100.00		1105	100.00		1105	100.00		1105
1106	100.00		1106	100.00		1106	100.00		1106
1107	100.00		1107	100.00		1107	100.00		1107
1108	100.00		1108	100.00		1108	100.00		1108
1109	100.00		1109	100.00		1109	100.00		1109
1110	100.00		1110	100.00		1110	100.00		1110
1111	100.00		1111	100.00		1111	100.00		1111
1112	100.00		1112	100.00		1112	100.00		1112
1113	100.00		1113	100.00		1113	100.00		1113
1114	100.00		1114	100.00		1114	100.00		1114
1115	100.00		1115	100.00		1115	100.00		1115
1116	100.00		1116	100.00		1116	100.00		1116
1117	100.00		1117	100.00		1117	100.00		1117
1118	100.00		1118	100.00		1118	100.00		1118
1119	100.00		1119	100.00		1119	100.00		1119
1120	100.00		1120	100.00		1120	100.00		1120
1121	100.00		1121	100.00		1121	100.00		1121
1122	100.00		1122	100.00		1122	100.00		1122
1123	100.00		1123	100.00		1123	100.00		1123
1124	100.00		1124	100.00		1124	100.00		1124
1125	100.00		1125	100.00		1125	100.00		1125
1126	100.00		1126	100.00		1126	100.00		1126
1127	100.00		1127	100.00		1127	100.00		1127
1128	100.00		1128	100.00		1128	100.00		1128
1129	100.00		1129	100.00		1129	100.00		1129
1130	100.00		1130	100.00		1130	100.00		1130
1131	100.00		1131	100.00		1131	100.00		1131
1132	100.00		1132	100.00		1132	100.00		1132
1133	100.00		1133	100.00		1133	100.00		1133
1134	100.00		1134	100.00		1134	100.00		1134
1135	100.00		1135	100.00		1135	100.00		1135
1136	100.00		1136	100.00		1136	100.00		1136
1137	100.00		1137	100.00		1137	100.00		1137
1138	100.00		1138</						



NYSE COMPOSITE PRICES

Table with 10 columns: Stock, High, Low, Open, Close, Change, Volume, Bid, Ask. Includes sub-sections for -S- and -T-.

Table with 10 columns: Stock, High, Low, Open, Close, Change, Volume, Bid, Ask. Includes sub-sections for -W- and -U-.

NASDAQ NATIONAL MARKET

Table with 10 columns: Stock, High, Low, Open, Close, Change, Volume, Bid, Ask. Includes sub-sections for -K-, -L-, -E-, -F-, -B-, -X-Z-, -G-, -H-, -I-, -J-, -K-, -L-, -M-, -N-, -O-, -P-, -Q-, -R-, -S-, -T-, -U-, -V-, -W-, -X-, -Y-, -Z-.

AMEX COMPOSITE PRICES

Table with 10 columns: Stock, High, Low, Open, Close, Change, Volume, Bid, Ask. Includes sub-sections for -S- and -T-.

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Continuation of NASDAQ NATIONAL MARKET table with sub-sections for -K-, -L-, -E-, -F-, -B-, -X-Z-, -G-, -H-, -I-, -J-, -K-, -L-, -M-, -N-, -O-, -P-, -Q-, -R-, -S-, -T-, -U-, -V-, -W-, -X-, -Y-, -Z-.



## AMERICA

## Higher bond prices help lift US equities

## Wall Street

FOR the second straight day, US stock markets moved higher in tandem with government bond prices, writes Patrick Harrison in New York.

At 1 pm the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 16.21 at 3,444.30. The more broadly based Standard & Poor's 500 was 0.80 higher at 449.17, while the Amex composite was up 1.53 at 419.61, and the Nasdaq composite up 3.05 at 676.17. Trading volume on the NYSE was 179m shares by 1 pm.

Once again, rising bond prices and falling yields helped stock market sentiment, even though part of the upward momentum in bonds came from bad news on retail sales, which fell 1.0 per cent in March.

Ultimately, however, bond prices were rising steadily because recent news on consumer and producer prices allayed fears that inflationary pressures had been building up in the economy.

Stocks were also boosted by big gains in overseas markets, notably in Tokyo, where the main index jumped 4.3 per cent after the Japanese government unveiled an ambitious fiscal stimulus package aimed at helping the ailing economy.

Otherwise, US markets were moved by corporate news, mostly in the form of first quarter earnings reports.

Brokerage and investment banking stocks were in particularly good form. Lifted by news of another quarter of record earnings at the securities industry's biggest company, Merrill Lynch, which reported profits of \$42m for the period, up 57 per cent on a year earlier.

The earnings helped Merrill shares rise 5% to \$78 in busy trading. Also firmer were PaineWebber, up 1% at \$27.75, Morgan Stanley, 1% higher at \$64, Dean Witter Discover, 1%.

firm at \$38, and JP Morgan, up 1% at \$72.

Motorola remained buoyed by Monday's news, released after the close of trading, of strong first quarter earnings. The stock rose 3/4 to \$73 1/4 in volume of 1.9m shares.

Other big computer issues were flat or weaker, with IBM down 1/4 at \$50 1/4. Digital Equipment 3/4 firmer at \$40 1/4 and Hewlett-Packard up 1/4 at \$75 1/4.

Other notable stocks to be aided by first quarter earnings were Westinghouse Electric, up 1/4 at \$15 1/4, and CBS, 3/4 higher at \$28 3/4.

Clorox rose 3/4 to \$30 1/4 as reports continued to circulate that Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal, the bank's largest individual shareholder, had sold almost 9m shares on Monday.

## Canada

TORONTO edged higher, led by banks following Toronto-Dominion Bank's assumption of up to \$3.5bn of Westpac Bank's credit commitments. By midday, the TSE 300 index was 3.79 ahead at 3,823.50 in turnover of C\$358m.

Among active stocks, CIBC, the banking company, added C\$1 1/4 to C\$48 in continued response to the sharp rise in fourth quarter profits, announced last Thursday.

## SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG fell following Saturday's assassination of the Communist Party chief and ANC national executive member, Mr Chris Hani. The overall index fell 60 to 3,529, heavily influenced by golds which shed 47, or 3.7 per cent on 1,217.

The industrial index closed 17 lower at 4,352. Dealers said that a major sell-off had been avoided, but that tomorrow's general stayaway, called by the African National Congress, was expected to dictate short term direction.

## ASIA PACIFIC

## Nikkei peaks as Hang Seng accelerates in London

## Tokyo

EQUITIES climbed by 4.3 per cent to a new 1993 peak as the announcement of Japan's ¥13,800bn supplementary budget to resuscitate the economy triggered active buying from dealers, arbitrageurs and public fund managers, writes Wayne Aponte in Tokyo.

The Nikkei average closed 858.15 higher at 20,740.29, after reaching an intraday high of 20,753.74 during the final minutes of trading and opening at its session low of 19,902.42. The last time the average closed above this level was March last year.

Volume shot up again to 750m shares compared with Monday's 336.6m. Advances overwhelmed declines by 1,056 to 65, with 66 unchanged, the Topix index of all first section issues rose 53.35 to 1,800.6 and, in London, the ISE/Nikkei 50 index fell 3.75 to 1,268.43.

## EUROPE

## French interest rate cut signals further reductions

BOURSES offered a limited response to the overnight strength in the US and Japanese equity markets, writes Our Markets Staff.

Mr Anthony Thomas, European strategist at Kleinwort Benson, said that Europe, these days, is looking inward much more than before, influenced by the German recession on one hand and by the fall in continental interest rates, on the other.

PARIS reacted to the cut in the 5-10 day repo rate with a 1.6 per cent gain in the CAC-40 index which closed 31.22 higher at 3,018.08. While the 2 per cent rate cut had been anticipated last week, the market now expects a decrease in intervention rates, perhaps before the weekend. The central bank's decision reflected the resilience of the franc, which many commentators had expected to come under pressure in the currency markets as speculators tested the new government's commitment to the franc fort policy. March inflation figures, much in line with expectations, also supported trading in average turnover of FF72.3bn.

Traders had initially expected share prices to fall since the stimulus package, although the largest ever, was in line with expectations. However, hopes of a sustained bullish trend offset concerns over weak economic fundamentals.

Mr Ryoji Tanaka, head of Japanese equity trading at Kidder Peabody International, said that most investors believed that additional buying will enter the market as the Nikkei average has settled above the 20,000 level.

Large-capitalisation stocks were bought aggressively, with Nippon Steel, the most active issue of the day, setting ¥16 higher to ¥409 while Mitsubishi Heavy Industries rose ¥27 to ¥882.

Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, which has led the recent market rally, closed up ¥40,000 at a session high of ¥1,070. Reports that the fiscal package announced yesterday included government invest-

ments in telecommunications infrastructure encouraged broadly based buying in the sector. Nippon Comsys, the telecommunications engineer, soared ¥130 to ¥1,400. Electric wire and cable issues were also strong with Fujikura up ¥40 to ¥1,040 and Furukawa Electric rising ¥23 to ¥724.

Exporters were higher in spite of the higher yen. Hitachi rose ¥39 to ¥908. Sony gained ¥200 to ¥5,000 and Toyota Motor advanced ¥50 to ¥1,740.

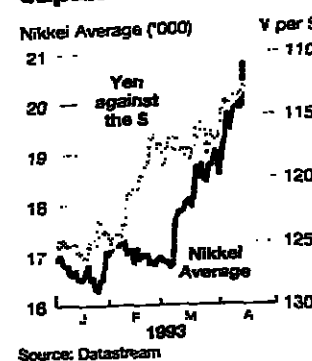
In Osaka, the OSE average rose 690.89 to settle at 22,113.38 in volume of 33m shares.

## Roundup

WIDELY divergent routes were taken by equity markets around the Pacific Rim.

HONG KONG went into a slow burn. Shares surged 2.1 per cent in anticipation of the announcement, which came after the market closed, of a resumption of Sino-British

## Japan



Source: Datastream

talks on the colony's future. The Hang Seng index rose 132.54 to 6,118.21 as turnover improved slightly to HK\$3.65bn.

The mood subsequently carried over into London trading of Hong Kong shares. HG Asia in London said that prices peaked at the equivalent of a further 300 point rise in the

Hang Seng before settling to close 275 ahead at 6,893. One analyst said: "This was a big surge for trading in London but we are used to this kind of volatility."

Gains in Hong Kong were recorded across the board, with banks and utilities leading the way. HSBC Holdings, which topped the active list, climbed HK\$1 to HK\$69.50 and Hong Kong Telecom rose 20 cents to HK\$10.

Jardine Matheson bounced HK\$2 higher to HK\$48 on hopes of a thaw in Sino-British relations. There was also talk of disposal of its Hongkong Land subsidiary, on which the group declined comment.

AUSTRALIA closed at a 17-month high, taking its lead from the strength of the Japanese and US markets. The All Ordinaries index rose 23.0 to 1,683.7, its highest since November 11, 1991.

BOMBAY ended with slight gains in a declining market on

intervention by the state-owned Unit Trust of India. The BSE index rose 13 to 2,235, having fallen in early trading to a 14-month low of 2,175.

KARACHI closed lower on political uncertainty after the resignations of two more cabinet ministers and the 100-share index ended 15.53 down at 1,094.11.

SEOUL failed to maintain the momentum that took shares to an 18-month high on Monday and the composite index edged 0.44 lower to 720.83 in turnover of Won897.9bn after Monday's Won533.2bn.

SINGAPORE was prey to profit-taking after last week's rally and the Straits Times Industrial index shed 14.33 to 1,683.51.

TAIWAN was lower for the fifth straight day in thin turnover. The weighted index spent most of the session moderately easier before a late wave of selling pushed it down 34.61 or 1.3 per cent to 4,597.56.

## FT-SE Actuaries Share Indices

April 13		THE EUROPEAN SERIES									
Hourly changes		Open	10.30	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	Close		
FT-SE Eurotrack 100	1199.03	1199.84	1199.73	1198.72	1198.26	1198.43	1197.83	1197.54	1197.81	1197.54	
FT-SE Eurotrack 200	1221.65	1222.39	1222.04	1221.51	1221.55	1223.27	1223.03	1223.27	1222.03	1220.72	
April 8		April 7		April 6		April 5		April 2			
FT-SE Eurotrack 100	1151.40	1144.26		1147.43		1136.15		1140.26			
FT-SE Eurotrack 200	1211.28	1205.25		1210.05		1202.24		1215.52			
Base value 1000 (1970/70) Highwater 100 - 1165.41, 200 - 1224.98 Lowwater 100 - 1157.10, 200 - 1213.68											

weight position now that comprehensive cost-cutting measures are in hand in the industry.

Daimler rose DM4.20 to DM569.20 after an intraday peak of DM576.00. BMW lost 50 pfennigs to DM484 after an intraday high of DM487.50, and Volkswagen ended with a gain of DM1 at DM312.

MADRID rose on Wall Street's strength and the view that the early general election might remove some of the uncertainties facing the market - although some analysts demurred, saying that a close-fought campaign could create

more problems than it solved. The general index rose 2.51 to 239.00. There were gains of up to, and over 10 per cent in constructions where Cubiertas ended Pta700 higher at Pta7,300 and FCC rose Pta510 to Pta5,620 on a Pta568bn hydrological plan to redirect water resources to the drought-ridden south.

ZURICH began firmly on hopes of lower interest rates, but the advance was not sustained as worries about the effect of a firmer Swiss franc weighed on the prospects for exporters. The SMI index finished 6.5 lower at 2,181.8.

Among export oriented companies, Nestlé bearers slipped SF5 to SF1.165 while Roche certificates eased SF20 to SF4.170.

Banks and insurers were the beneficiaries of lower rate hopes. CS Holding bears firmed SF10 to SF2.410, recouping early losses which followed Thursday's news that Moody's had downgraded the long-term debt of Credit Suisse.

AMSTERDAM followed the general trend with a gain in the CBS Trendy index of 0.7 to 108.6. VNU put on 80 cents to F112.10 ahead of confirming after the close that it had reached agreement to sell its printing division.

MILAN moved ahead from the start before gains were pared by technical trading ahead of today's expiry of options contracts. The Comit index ended 0.92 higher at 513.01.

Privatisation stocks were mixed in further response to last Thursday's sell-off timetable. Among candidates due to be sold by May, Credito Itali-

ano fell L80 to L2,630 while Sme gained L60 to L5,990.

STOCKHOLM edged ahead in thin trading and the Aktiesvården index rose 2.3 to 956.9.

Volvo B shares added SKr10 to SKr382 following news at the weekend that its North American truck operations had returned to profit.

Hennes and Mauritz, the clothing retailer, added SKr18 or 5 per cent to SKr208 after Mr Stefan Persson, the majority shareholder, agreed to accept SKr800m of company shares in payment for the SKr1bn convertible debenture loan that he holds.

DUBLIN took its gains further, the ISEQ overall index closing 28.92, or 1.92 higher at 1,551.36, on anticipation of yet another rate cut this Friday, and on indications of improved cash flow at domestic institutions - meaning that they had no need to sell into continued foreign buying of the market.

TEL AVIV rose in strong trading with a gain in the index of 4.72 or 2.3 per cent to 215.44.

## Italy rebounds on recovery hopes

MARKETS IN PERSPECTIVE					
	% change in local currency			% change sterling	
	1 Week	4 Weeks	1 Year	Start of 1993	Start of 1992
Austria	+2.18	-4.95	-12.79	+2.55	+3.37
Belgium	+0.03	+2.57	+11.11	+14.72	+15.53
Denmark	-0.20	+0.10	-11.34	+9.37	+11.36
Finland	+2.07	+6.01	+42.84	+29.47	+17.45
France	-0.27	+1.40	+3.13	+9.03	+9.81
Germany	-0.06	-3.08	-5.82	+8.52	+8.44
Ireland	+2.31	+10.60	+10.84	+27.70	+19.87
Italy	+9.42	+0.82	+12.25	+19.71	+11.37
Netherlands	+0.14	+1.11	+6.67	+11.07	+10.95
Norway	+0.98	+1.25	-0.30	+11.51	+11.99
Spain	-0.82	-0.89	-2.85	+10.64	+9.93
Sweden	-1.36	-2.03	+13.68	+4.87	-3.48
Switzerland	-0.10	+2.78	+19.45	+6.29	+4.43
UK	-1.57	-2.95	+17.31	+0.15	+1.16
EUROPE	-0.34	-1.09	+8.41	+5.77	+4.93
Australia	-1.25	-0.05	+5.18	+6.89	+9.08
Hong Kong	-1.90	+1.47	+27.74	+13.29	+13.41
Japan	+1.99	+15.15	+33.24	+19.10	+31.28
Malaysia	+2.23	+4.39	+30.36	+10.54	+11.00
New Zealand	-0.57	-1.83	+11.34	+3.00	+6.88
Singapore	+0.82	+4.32	+17.07	+6.57	+7.57
Canada	-0.38	+0.15	+2.01	+4.71	+4.69
USA	+0.11	-1.84	+10.44	+1.29	+0.28
Mexico	+1.68	+6.58	+3.93	+0.05	-0.22
South Africa	+0.82	+5.71	+5.22	+12.70	+18.85
WORLD INDEX	+0.52	+3.15	+15.54	+7.87	+9.55

† Based on April 9th 1993. Copyright: The Financial Times Limited, Goldman, Sachs & Co. and NatWest Securities Limited.

## By John Pitt

IN a week shortened by the Easter holiday break, Italy emerged with strong gains as investors reacted to comments by the governor of the Bank of Italy that the economy was showing signs of recovery.

Japan was another significant feature with the Nikkei average breaking through the 20,000 barrier during trading on Thursday before closing slightly below, but still at a new year's high.

The gains in Italy were also encouraged by the government's statement, towards the end of the week, of its determination to press ahead with its privatisation programme, together with final cabinet approval of the law on private pensions.

But it was the growing belief that economic recovery was under way which really provided buying stimulus, at least among domestic investors. Some analysts noted that foreign institutions remained

absent last week as they awaited this weekend's referendum on constitutional changes.

Cautioning against too much optimism, Goldman Sachs in its regular monthly strategy note comments that "on earnings the Italian equity market [short-term] still looks overvalued by about 27 per cent and faces a difficult reporting season".

On a longer perspective, Goldman says that "the upside largely depends on how long it takes to build a perceived stable political equilibrium through new elections. Great emphasis should also be put on the 1994 budget law and (the government's) ability to sustain the fiscal discipline recently introduced".

While Spain was not a feature last week, the decision by Mr Felipe Gonzalez, the prime minister, on Monday to call a snap election for June 6 could provide a short-term boost for equities. Mr Victor Galliano of Baring Securities comments that pressure on the peseta may lead to lower interest rates, even before polling day.

## FT-ACTUARIES WORLD INDICES

Jointly compiled by The Financial Times Limited, Goldman, Sachs & Co. and NatWest Securities Limited In conjunction with the Institute of Actuaries and the Faculty of Actuaries																
MONDAY APRIL 12 1993																
FRIDAY APRIL 9 1993																
DOLLAR INDEX																
Figures in parentheses show number of lines of stock																
	US Dollar Index	Day's Change %	Pound Sterling Index	Yen Index	DM Index	Local Currency Index	Local % chg on day	Gross Div. Yield	US Dollar Index	Pound Sterling Index	Yen Index	DM Index	Local Currency Index	1993 High	1992 Low	Year ago (parentheses)
Australia (88)	138.45	+0.4	132.68	98.72	114.70	129.34	+0.0	3.82	137.85	133.64	98.70	115.00	129.34	141.00	117.19	143.35
Austria (18)	144.43	-0.3	138.42	102.98	118.65	120.38	+0.0	1.89	144.88	140.45	103.73	120.85	129.38	150.96	131.88	183.29
Belgium (42)	153.60	-0.2	147.21	109.51	127.25	125.32	+0.0	4.57	153.92	149.22	110.20	128.40	125.32	153.92	131.19	135.87
Canada (110)	122.77	+0.5	117.86	87.53	101.70	112.07	+0.5	2.97	122.22	118.48	87.50	101.94	112.07	125.87	111.41	126.63
Denmark (33)	208.89	+0.7	181.01	146.81	172.89	173.73	+1.2	1.20	207.26	184.38	172.85	173.73	173.73	210.58	189.01	220.90
Finland (23)	82.17	+0.5	78.75	58.56	60.08	98.93	+0.0	1.26	81.78	78.27	58.54	62.21	98.93	82.17	65.50	80.99
France (86)	184.34	+0.7	157.50	117.17	136.13	139.07	+0.0	3.22	182.25	158.26	116.87	138.07	139.07	165.09	122.72	184.74
Germany (62)	114.74	+0.7	109.07	81.23	95.06	95.06	+0.0	2.23	113.99	110.48	81.50	95.06	95.06	115.03	101.59	118.92
Hong Kong (65)	251.30	+0.0	240.85	179.18	208.20	248.48	+0.0	3.71	251.27	245.80	179.30	248.48	248.48	216.82	201.17	250.81
Ireland (15)	163.78	+0.6	156.97	118.78	135.69	150.53	+0.0	3.52	162.76	157.79	118.53	135.77	150.53	163.78	129.28	156.31
Italy (73)	92.04	+0.5	58.46	44.23	51.40	72.28	+0.0	1.07	91.72	58.84	44.19	51.49	72.28	64.28	53.78	69.70
Japan (470)	137.71	-0.1	131.98	88.19	114.10	98.19	-0.5	0.85	137.68	133.57	88.72	115.03	98.19	124.34	100.75	92.74
Malaysia (24)	294.83	+0.6	282.96	210.21	244.25	282.73	+0.5	2.29	293.16	284.21	209.69	282.73	282.73	301.45	273.03	292.91
Mexico (18)	1891.71	+0.0	1892.58	1184.84	1378.58	9823.96	+0.0	1.07	1890.91	1610.18	1189.15	1385.49	9823.96	1725.81	1410.30	1672.83
Netherlands (24)	170.79	+0.7	163.68	121.78	141.50	138.60	+0.0	3.92	168.68	164.30	121.48	141.55	138.60	170.79	150.39	151.45
New Zealand (13)	46.44	+0.3	44.51	33.11	35.47	45.84	+0.0	4.73	46.29	44.81	33.14	35.47	45.84	47.03	40.56	42.91
Norway (22)	156.52	+0.7	150.01	111.61	128.87	144.18	+0.0	1.83	155.37	150.62	111.24	128.87	144.18	156.52	137.71	140.23
Singapore (36)	228.28	-0.5	218.79	162.77	189.12	170.82	-0.8	1.97	229.51	222.50	184.38	191.45	171.80	231.24	207.24	197.23
South Africa (80)	177.50	+0.0	170.12	129.56	147.05	177.11	+0.0	2.84	177.50	172.08	127.08	148.07	177.11	178.48	144.72	227.58
Spain (12)	129.16	+0.6	123.78	62.10	107.00	115.50	+0.5	6.39	129.16	124.27	61.78	105.35	115.50	131.87	115.22	146.10
Sweden (33)	162.52	+0.7	155.76	115.89	134.65	181.44	+0.0	1.86	161.41	156.48	115.57	134.05	181.44	168.90	140.40	172.56
Switzerland (58)	120.37	+0.9	115.32	85.90	90.97	109.13	+0.0	1.99	119.20	115.58	85.35	95.45	109.13	120.37	108.91	130.93
United Kingdom (219)	129.33	+0.6	123.75	146.10	170.00	174.58	+0.0	4.08	129.33	126.03	146.10	174.58	174.58	169.03	177.17	180.29
USA (615)	126.96	+1.4	75.36	36.48	151.59	182.96	+1.4	1.38	126.96	124.16	36.48	151.59	182.96	175.17	175.36	185.42
Austria (18)	145.39	+0.9	139.34	103.67	120.46	123.07	+0.0	3.39	144.16	138.78	103.22	120.28	123.05	145.39	139.32	148.41
Nordic (14)	154.30	+0.7	147.68	110.02	127.02	150.17	+0.8	1.68	153.27	146.98	109.73	127.85	150.17	154.30	139.29	176.41
Pacific Basin (713)	142.69	-0.1	136.13	100.54	116.82	103.77	-0.5	1.15	141.11	136.82	101.05	117.73	103.77	142.69	105.89	99.29
Pacific (1478)	142.69	-0.1	136.13	100.54	116.82	103.77	-0.5	1.06	142.25	137.91	101.84	118.96	118.03	142.68	117.26	117.97
North America (278)	176.22	+0.1	168.68	118.68	146.68	176.22	+0.1	2.78	176.22	168.68	118.68	146.68	176.22	176.22	168.68	183.10
Europe Ex. UK (547)	126.09	+0.2	120.84	89.92	104.48	111.08	+0.0	2.92	125.27	121.45	89.71	104.48	111.08	126.09	112.51	126.09
Pacific Ex. Japan (243)	137.78	+0.2	126.86	123.93	143.98	158.29	+0.0	3.43	137.78	123.93	143.98	158.29	158.29	174.52	150.72	183.95
UK (1567)	155.60	+0.7	147.12	105.67	127.29	134.57	+0.5	2.19	155.60	147.12	105.67	127.29	134.57	173.84	143.30	130.53
World Ex. UK (1967)	153.63	+0.7	147.12	105.67	127.29	134.57	+0.5	2.19	153.63	147.12	105.67	127.29	134.57	173.84	143.30	130.53
World Ex. So. Afr. (2126)	155.60	+0.7	148.12	110.96	128.82	137.37	+0.5	2.37	154.45	149.73	110.96	128.82	137.37	181.61	155.60	181.61
World Ex. Japan (1716)	166.86	+0.1	159.82	118.99	128.94	158.87	-0.8	3.01	166.03	159.99	118.17	137.69	158.86	167.11	157.47	157.47
The World Index (2186)	155.83	+0.4	149.16	110.97	128.94	137.78	+0.4	2.37	154.49	149.73	110.61	128.88	137.78	155.83	137.32	134.76